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49. 233.

**PROPHETIC OUTLINES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
AND THE ANTICHRISTIAN POWER,**

AS TRACED IN THE VISIONS OF DANIEL AND ST. JOHN ;

IN

TWELVE LECTURES

PREACHED IN THE

CHAPEL OF LINCOLN'S INN,

ON THE

FOUNDATION OF BISHOP WARBURTON.

BY

BENJAMIN HARRISON, M.A.

ARCHDEACON OF MAIDSTONE,

DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE MOST REVEREND WILLIAM, LATE LORD

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TO THE

TRUSTEES OF THE LECTURE

FOUNDED BY THE

RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM WARBURTON,

LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER,

THE FOLLOWING LECTURES,

PREACHED ON THAT FOUNDATION,

ARE

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

P R E F A C E.

IN committing these Lectures to the press, the Author has been desirous to fulfil, with no longer delay than was unavoidable, a condition which is imposed by the will of the Right Reverend Founder of the Lecture, but which the Author was prevented from complying with, by other more pressing duties, at the time of the expiration of his office. He has felt it also to be incumbent upon him to discharge, as speedily as might be, the obligation under which he was thus laid, as a duty which he owes to the memory of that deeply revered Friend and Patron from whom he received the appointment. The privilege which, under such circumstances, he might perhaps without impropriety have claimed, of inscribing these pages to the memory of One, the remembrance of whom he must ever cherish with peculiar veneration and affection, the Author has forborne to exercise; lest it should seem as though he wished unbecomingly to connect what he has feebly and imperfectly attempted, and for which he must himself be solely responsible, with the sanction

of an authority which was always on every account high, and now more than ever sacred. He cannot, however, and ought not to deny himself the satisfaction of expressing here his grateful and affectionate sense of the kindness and favour which in so many ways were shewn towards him; while, at the same time, he would record the wish, which he cannot but deeply feel, that he had been able to discharge the office committed to him in a manner more worthy of its own importance, and of *him* from whose hands he received it.

The Author trusts, nevertheless, that whatever imperfections and faults may be discovered in the execution of the duty laid upon him, they will not be found to be such as essentially to interfere with the main object which he has throughout had in view. It appeared to him, as the result of thoughtful consideration of the subject, that, while the visions of Sacred Prophecy, particularly those which he has selected for examination, have received from the labours of able and ingenious expositors a minute application and variety of illustration which will often irresistibly captivate the reader, and carry along with them his imagination and judgment, there is not unfrequently left behind a feeling of doubtfulness in regard to the conclusions arrived at, when once the eye is taken off from that particular period of history, perhaps recent or almost present, in which the fulfilment is sought for. And, what is yet more to be guarded against, there

is danger of a similar feeling extending itself to other portions of Prophetic Scripture, the fulfilment of which had seemed to be satisfactorily determined by the general consent of the Christian world. Under these impressions it appeared to the Writer, when he was called to preach the Lecture on Bishop Warburton's Foundation, that some service might perhaps be rendered to the cause of Christian Truth and of Divine Revelation, and some assistance afforded to the student of the Prophetic Volume, by an attempt to ascertain and mark certain points and portions of Sacred Prophecy which may be considered as already placed, by general consent in regard to their fulfilment, out of the reach of doubt or question; while others seem to await the progress of time, and the corresponding progress of Interpretation in the Church, to give them a like degree of certainty. Or, to use an illustration which may perhaps make more plain and distinct the general design, it may be said that while Prophecy, partly fulfilled and partly unfulfilled, resembles in some sort a tract of country not yet fully explored, the object to be aimed at would seem to be, to mark, as by an outline more or less strongly drawn, those points which may be regarded as certain and undoubted, and those which, as being involved in different degrees of doubtfulness, may be sketched in fainter lines, connecting, nevertheless, in some sort the several parts together, until further discoveries shall enable the future

geographer to complete and fill up the chart which at present can be only imperfectly traced.

To ascertain, in some such manner, the outlines and landmarks of Inspired Prophecy has been the main object which the Author has had in view in the present Lectures: it may be a comparatively humble office that he has endeavoured to fulfil, but, at the same time, one which, he cannot but think, is at the present time not without its use and importance. His design, as will be seen, does not *exclude* investigations carried further, or the filling up, in detail, of a general outline; it would only endeavour, first of all, to preserve the outline itself from the danger of obliteration, to secure the salient points from being lost, or obscured, for want of sufficient distinction between the substantial and the shadowy, or from the influence of *undue* doubtfulness, the result of a not unnatural re-action against the decisions of an over-confident positiveness of interpretation. So far as the Author has had occasion to enter upon questions in regard to which there is room for doubt or diversity of opinion, he has been more willing to incur the charge of defining too little, than of defining too much; convinced that the spirit which should guide an inquirer on the sacred field of Prophecy, especially where we touch the confines of that which is unfulfilled, is the same spirit of humility and self-distrust which expressed itself in the words of our own cautious and catholic-minded Bishop Ridley, when, in regard to

a kindred subject, the mysteries of the Divine decrees, he said to one of his brother confessors, in the midst of much disputation, "Sir, in these matters I am so fearful, that I dare not speak further than the very text doth, as it were, lead me by the hand¹." And to this may be added the expression of a conviction not less deep, that in the careful and diligent study of the Prophetic Volume *as a whole*, beginning from the Old Testament and going on to the New, will be found that which will serve as a sure guide to "lead" us "by the hand," so far as we may be permitted to penetrate, onward into the inner depths and mysteries of the last and most deeply mysterious volume of Inspired Prophecy;—a volume which will then be seen not to stand by itself, an insulated portion of Divine Revelation, but to be indeed the solemn winding up and final consummation of the whole.

The Author has been content throughout to trace what would seem to him, on the best consideration which he was able to give to the subject, to present the true outline of interpretation, without entering on a detailed examination of counter-theories, which he has not the less carefully studied, though he has seldom distinctly referred to them. It may be said emphatically of prophetic exposition, that refutation and controversial discussion are interminable, and in too many cases not less interminable than

¹ Life, by Gloucester Ridley, p. 553.

unsatisfactory in their result. The Author felt, at the same time, that the most attentive consideration was due to the arguments which had been recently urged, with an ability and force of learning which gave them more than ordinary weight, against the commonly received interpretations of the principal visions, in particular, of the book of Daniel, and some points connected with them. Into the consideration of the arguments in question he was disposed to enter the more freely and unreservedly, because he felt that he might discuss them as with friends, on the common ground of an appeal to authorities recognized alike by both; and in the spirit of the saying to which they whose friendship he is privileged to claim would cordially respond, "*Amicus Plato, sed magis amica Veritas.*" Of the service rendered to the cause of sound interpretation and accurate historical inquiry by the spirit which their labours would encourage, it is needless to speak; and those who are most sensible of its value will be the most desirous to guard it from all that may appear questionable in its application to any portion of Holy Writ.

The Author would wish to observe that while, from the nature of his design throughout, he has been compelled to give, in many instances, the result, rather than the detailed process of investigation on which it rests, this has been particularly the case in regard to the subject treated of in the Sixth and part of the Seventh Lecture. To have drawn

out fully the argument in support of the interpretation on which the Author has there ventured, grounded on the historic and prophetic records of the Old Testament, would have made it necessary for him to embody in the Lectures, to an extent disproportionate to their general design, a complete dissertation on the sacred symbols there referred to. He has, therefore, contented himself, in that part of his subject, with indicating generally, as far as was possible, the conclusion at which, on a careful investigation of Scripture, he had arrived, without attempting a discussion which would require much larger limits.

With regard to the Notes contained in the Appendix, references to them will, in almost all cases, be found in the notes at the foot of the pages; in a few instances only, notes have been added in the Appendix without such reference. It is presumed, throughout the Lectures, that the reader has before him the chapter of Daniel, or of the Revelation, which is under consideration in the Lecture; and therefore, where the verse only is specified in the foot-note, the reference is to the chapter thus immediately in view.

The Author has only, in conclusion, to request of his reader that he will be content to follow on with him in his course of inquiry, while he himself endeavours to follow the inspired Text in its sacred leading from point to point; not caring to anticipate results, in this portion or that, in regard

to its probable coincidence or disagreement with one class of expositors or another; but rather judging this only, viz., how far the interpretation maintained or suggested seems to be borne out by the text, or by other Scripture referred to for its illustration. And he humbly trusts that these pages, however through their manifold imperfections they may fall short of the object which they have in view, in aiding the reverential study and right understanding of God's holy word, may, nevertheless, tend at least to strengthen and deepen the impression that, whether it be permitted to us more or less fully to discover its mysterious import, it bears evidently stamped upon it, in the wonderful harmony which pervades it in its vast extent and varied composition, the undoubted marks of having proceeded from one Divine Author. And to the thoughtful and religious mind these disclosures of God's Almighty Providence and "manifold wisdom," as exhibited in the visions of Prophecy, and made "known by the Church," will seem to demand of us, His creatures, the more and more attentive contemplation and study, amidst the perils of the latter times, and as the ends of the world draw near.

Precincts, Canterbury,

June 16, 1849.

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 „ 64, note 2, *for* Vid. Note, Appendix, *read* Vid. Hurd, Disc. xi.
 „ 129, line 2, *for* object, *read* subject,
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 „ „ „ , line 15, *for* 169. *read* 1697.
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LECTURE I¹.

REV. i. 3.

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”

It is impossible to observe with any attention the signs of the present times, and not to perceive that we are arrived at what may be termed an era, not only in regard to events affecting intimately the welfare of the Christian Church, but also especially, —and as arising naturally out of such a crisis,—in regard to the interpretation of Sacred Prophecy. The spirit of inquiry which is abroad in the earth upon every subject of human knowledge or speculation, must necessarily make its presence to be felt not least in matters which most deeply concern man's immortal interests, and which touch the innermost springs of his being. And it is indeed well for us that, in times which seem to answer to the prophetic description of the days when “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased²,” men's thoughts are not engrossed and absorbed altogether in the things of time and sense, things

¹ Preached Nov. 28, 1841.

² Dan. xii. 4.

that “perish with the using³,”—the improvements of mechanical art, the comforts of life to which those improvements minister, the laws and ordinances of the material universe, a system “beautiful in its time⁴,” yet rapidly hasting to destruction. It is assuredly a great gain, and must be so regarded by every one in whose estimate of things mind and spirit rank higher than the material and the bodily, that, amid the downward tendencies of a confessedly mechanical age, the minds of men should, in whatever degree, have been turned to the higher and more heavenly objects amongst which, as partakers of a spiritual nature, we are privileged, even in this preparatory state, to “live, and move, and have our being.” It is a sign to be hailed with thankfulness, if, amidst the process which in other departments of knowledge and inquiry is going on,—of exploring to the foundation what had before been viewed only as existing and established; discarding ancient prejudices and bringing to light, from beneath the mass of accumulated error, real or supposed, the long hidden truth,—there has been something akin to this in operation, in regard to matters of religion, to the first principles of our holy Faith, the original foundations of the Christian Church. We can hardly fail to regard it as a matter of satisfaction, if there has been awakened in men’s minds a deeper sympathy with the past, as well as a more lively interest in the yet undeveloped future; more of that natural piety which will not suffer one generation to sever itself, in proud contempt or heartless self-sufficiency, from those that have gone before; but would link one to another by the sense of a common

³ Col. ii. 22.⁴ Eccles. iii. 11.

interest; and so would make us feel that we belong indeed to a vast body, of which "if one member suffer," however far removed in time or place, "all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it ⁵."

The revival of a feeling such as this, and the investigation of the history of past times undertaken in such a spirit, would assuredly be a subject of unfeigned satisfaction and thankfulness to every true Christian heart. It were productive of great and substantial benefit, if it led men to solid study of the records of history, as well as of that inspired Word of which those records show the fulfilment; if it exposed ignorance and superficial thought, traditional prejudices, and mis-statements growing by continual repetition; if it restored the glow of charity by a rekindled love of truth. But as, in our present imperfect state, the good is never unaccompanied by the liability to evil, we must not close our eyes to the danger of a hasty rejection of views of history, and systems of interpretation, which perhaps had been by many overhastily, and without inquiry, acquiesced in; but which nevertheless had their own grounds of argument and plausibility, though we have perhaps never ourselves entered into them, and know after all but little respecting them, except that they are now regarded by high authorities as untenable. We may otherwise, ourselves, fall unconsciously into the very same superficial habit of mind which we condemn in others; dazzled, perhaps, in some measure by a love of novelty, and the excitement of a new and wider field of inquiry opening before us; and treating the judgments of men who were in their day great lights

⁵ 1 Cor. xii. 26.

of the Christian Church, and of our own branch of it in particular, with a disrespect which has its origin in a temper of mind out of which a true reverence for earlier and better days will never spring. And to this, we must be conscious, we are more than ordinarily liable in an age which is certainly indisposed to deep and laborious thought;—an age in which, upon every subject that is presented to it, a prompt and positive decision is expected; and the spirit which is fostered by our periodical criticism, too often hasty and flippant, is ever ready to pass its verdict,—the conclusion of a few hours or days,—on that which should rather have been the patient study of months and years⁶.

But akin to the feeling of which I have spoken as revived of late towards past ages, is that which seems in the present day to be growing around us, of desire for a closer union and more free intercourse with our brethren in other portions and communions of Christendom. The facility of communication which has been effected in our own times, in the mysterious order of God's Providence, has, as it were, brought the ends of the earth near together; the distance has, if we may so say, been annihilated, which separated men one from another; the barriers which kept them apart have been to a great extent, and in a marvellous manner, broken down; and in different ways, for evil or for good, men seem to have awakened to the consciousness that "union is strength." And such a feeling, revived in its purest and holiest form, within the Church of God, were doubtless, in itself, a sign full of hope for her most sacred interests: for unity is her essential

⁶ In the above paragraph, the Author alluded particularly to the tone of a good deal that had then recently been put forth, particularly in some articles in Reviews.

characteristic, and the last solemn prayer which her Divine Founder offered for His disciples on earth was, "that they all" might "be one'." My present purpose, however, in pointing to this particular, is to mark its influence specially on the interpretation of Prophecy.

It has been sometimes broadly laid down that Prophecy, from its nature and object, can take no cognizance of the internal divisions of Christendom; that its great end was to be an evidence for Christianity, and the Christian Church, in the face of the world; and, consequently, that any interpretation of a "controversial" character, having reference to schisms or corruptions within the Church's pale, is altogether inadmissible⁷. Of the evils, indeed, resulting from the spirit of controversy in the interpretation of prophetic Scripture, it is scarcely possible to speak too strongly; but at the same time the maxim in question must be carefully guarded against determining too boldly, *à priori*, what are the ends and objects of this part of God's revelation.

We are not at liberty to decide that the only purpose of Prophecy was to be an evidence to "them that are without;" it *may* have been intended also to be a guide and support to the Church herself in seasons of her greatest perplexity; "a light shining in a dark place until the day" should "dawn, and the day-star arise in the hearts"⁸ of her wayworn pilgrims; "a lantern unto her feet and a light unto her path," when they on whose guidance she might have thought she could most securely depend, seemed

⁷ John xvii. 11, 21, 22.

⁸ Dr. Whitley, in his "Scheme and Completion of Prophecy," (London, 1830,) strongly and

earnestly presses this view. See particularly Sections i. and ii.

⁹ 2 Pet. i. 19.

to be following earthly meteors, and “the light” itself was “darkened in the heavens thereof¹.” It *may* be, for aught we know, that, even regarded merely as an *evidence* to Divine Revelation, Prophecy was designed to meet the most plausible and insulting objection that Infidelity has ever dared to make. I allude to that which is drawn from the apparent obscuration, if so it were, of the light of Christianity through many ages, the unworthy practice of its professors; its grievous corruptions; the human passions, the secular policy, nay, even the imposture or deceit which have been enlisted in its service; the ignorance and superstition, or gross fanaticism and error, which have overspread the lands in which its dominion once seemed to be the most securely established. It *may* be that the triumphant answer to these and such-like cavils was to be found in the fact, that all this had been foretold; traced with no shrinking hand, and pourtrayed in no faint colours, on that roll of Prophecy, which thus was to be a living witness to Divine Wisdom accomplishing its purposes of love and mercy not only through the instrumentality of man’s weakness, but even by overruling his wilfulness or wickedness. There would be, assuredly, in this nothing *à priori* inconceivable: the question whether there *be*, in point of fact, such scenes or not, delineated in the visions of Prophecy, is a matter for humble and patient inquiry to search out and discover. Even, however, as an *Evidence* to Christianity, it *might* be that the most striking proof of Divine Foreknowledge exhibited, in the face of an unbelieving world, was to be seen in the accomplishment of what might have appeared,

¹ Isa. v. 30.

(as a distinguished Lecturer on this Foundation has emphatically designated “the prophecy of the great Apostacy”) “a paradox of prediction, which must be allowed to surpass the ordinary limits of human observation, and almost to exceed the power which man has to corrupt the best gifts of God².” Or if it should appear, from a careful examination of the disclosures of prophetic Scripture, that, amidst all “the overflowings of ungodliness” in latter times, the powers of darkness have not yet put forth to the utmost their might and malice; if the *full* manifestation of the Spirit of evil be still future, and all that has hitherto reared its head in Christendom in the form of Antichrist has been (to use language sanctioned by Antiquity) rather the “precursor³” than the actual impersonation of that which is to

² “That this system of ambition and falsehood should succeed; that it should be established with the submission, and indeed with the deluded conviction, of men *still holding the profession of Christianity*, which is the prophecy of St. Paul, is a paradox of prediction, &c. . . . The natural incredibility of it is, not that such errors or abuses should be established in the world, but *that they should be grafted on the Christian Faith*, in opposition to, and in outrage of, its genius and its commands, and take a bold possession of *the Christian Church*. There, however, they have been grafted; and there they have had possession. And the strength of the improbable fact is the proof of the prophetic inspiration.”—Davison on Prophecy, p. 457 (3rd ed. Oxford, 1834).

³ “In the second of the Clementine Homilies, a false prophet, or impostor, it is said, will *precede* Antichrist; and, then, towards the time of the end, Antichrist himself will first appear, before the return of the true Christ. . .

“Irenæus, writing against Marcus, a leader of the sect of the Colorbasei, quotes a passage in iambics from one of the elders, directed against him, which is to this effect: ‘Marcus, thou maker of idols, and interpreter of prodigies, . . . having in thee a *precursor* of the subtlety which will take the place of God.’—Adv. Hær. i. 12. 76. 3. . . . “In fact, Irenæus speaks of Marcus, as almost the actual *precursor* of Antichrist, ‘*præcursor quasi vere existens Antichristi.*’”—Greswell on the Parables, vol. i. p. 380.

be yet more fearfully “revealed in his time;” even though it were an open and avowed Apostacy that were then to be looked for, and therefore such as, on every hypothesis, we should expect to find traced in the broadest lines of Sacred Prophecy; still it must be “in the temple of God” that “that Wicked One” would sit enthroned⁴; and if so, we should be in danger of blindness to the impending peril, if we had persuaded ourselves beforehand, that Prophecy was altogether concerned with things external to the Church, and took no cognizance of its internal divisions.

The mischief, however, which has been done by the controversial spirit in the interpretation of the Prophetic volume, it is impossible not to see and feel; and in proceeding to notice the chief sources of error in the study of Prophecy, I would mention this among the first and foremost. Assuredly it was a spirit very different from this that animated the bosom of the beloved disciple, warm as was his zeal for “the truth⁵,” and keen his denunciation of error⁶: and it will be only as we partake of the same spirit which was in him, that we shall be enabled to understand aright the heavenly visions with which he was favoured. But, with the narrowness of view to which we all are liable, whether in regard to truth or error,—seeing the outward development, but less quick to discern the hidden principle within; and unskilled in detecting the selfsame germ of evil lurking in various forms and assuming continually some new disguise,—we are continually in danger of having our minds so occupied with some one of the many shapes of Error as to be uncon-

⁴ 2 Thess. ii. 4, 8.

⁶ Vv. 7, 10.

⁵ 2 John 1, 2, 4.

scious, meanwhile, of its near approach in another; and thus, with the page of Prophecy full before us, may fail nevertheless to discover its pregnant meaning and manifold application. For Prophecy, being the word of Him who "seeth not as man seeth," looking not on outward things, but rather revealing their essential elements and characteristics, must take into its view far more than our limited understandings dream of; and accordingly its language, though with perfect unity of sense, will seem again and again to be fulfilled in various manifestations of the same principle, amidst successive scenes of the Divine economy. And this lies far beyond the narrow view of the mere controversialist; unskilled in that "mystery of iniquity" which is ever working in the human heart, ready to put forth variously its secret power in one form or another, and, according to that strange law of our being by which, as we see continually, extremes apparently coincide, startling us with the near presence of the very evil from which we had thought ourselves to be farthest removed.

But next to the danger which thus besets the study of Prophecy, arising from the narrowness of view and the bitterness of feeling which attends the controversial spirit, is the over-venturous presumption which would seek to determine "the times and the seasons," of which we are expressly told by Him, the Great Prophet of His Church, that "it is not for" us "to know" them, seeing that "the Father hath put" them "in his own power'." The discredit which such attempts have too frequently brought not only upon the skill of the individual

' Acts i. 7.

interpreter but,—what is far more serious,—upon the study of Prophecy itself, it is scarcely necessary for me to point out. And it is, perhaps, even more important to guard from undue application the maxim to which the failure of such speculations has given rise—the maxim, I mean, that it was never the design of Prophecy to give us the knowledge of coming events, but simply that when the event foretold has come to pass, we might recognize the Divine foreknowledge manifested in the prediction⁸. This principle, broadly stated, would tend to discourage altogether the study of unfulfilled prophecy. And it would be difficult to reconcile it with the blessing pronounced, in the words before us, which stand at the opening of the mysterious visions of the Apocalypse, upon him “that readeth” and them “that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein”—things which were undoubtedly still future, though shortly to be revealed; “for,” it is added, “the time is at hand.” The terms in which the blessing here pronounced is conveyed, imply an attentive and thoughtful study of the prophetic record; its words are to be read and heard and kept. And, indeed, it is only by such diligent study that we can ever hope to ascertain how much of the revelations of

⁸ “The folly of interpreters,” says Sir Isaac Newton, “has been, to foretel times and things by this Prophecy [the Apocalypse], as if God designed to make them prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the prophecies of

the Old Testament, not to gratify men’s curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event, and his own Providence, not the interpreter’s, be then manifested thereby to the world.”—*Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and St. John*, p. 251.

Prophecy *has* been already fulfilled, and how much, as being still unfulfilled, is, according to this view, to be regarded as forbidden ground. Especially is this the case in regard to the Apocalypse, concerning which opinions so opposite have been, in our own days, maintained by learned men, as, on the one side, that the whole has long ago been accomplished⁹; on the other, that the whole refers to one great conflict, still future, between the hosts of Christ and Antichrist¹. And if there were any, though it were even a doubtful, probability, that times of more than ordinary trial were thus in store for the Church, and which might possibly come in our own days; and if, moreover, the warnings contained in the Prophecy itself implied that men's spirits would, individually, be exposed therein to a searching probation; it would surely become us well,—as a matter not of speculative inquiry, but of deep practical concern,—so to have studied the prophetic marks and characteristics of that which was thus approaching, that we might not, when it came, be taken by surprise, and find ourselves unawares in the very midst of our greatest peril.

For it must never be forgotten, that the scenes which are successively unfolding as ages roll on, are not simply objects of contemplation,—a mere spectacle for us to gaze on; even though it were a spectacle so divine and glorious and worthy of man's reverential regard as is the fulfilment of God's great purposes of wisdom and love towards His moral

⁹ See Professor Lee's "Sermons and Dissertations on Prophecy," Diss. ii. Part ii.

¹ See Dr. Maitland's "At-

tempt to elucidate the Prophecies respecting Antichrist," "Inquiry," &c.; Todd's "Donnellan Lectures," &c.

creation: rather they are scenes in which every one of us is personally concerned, with an endless existence, in bliss or woe unutterable, depending upon our behaviour in the midst of them. But, even were this not so, and considering it merely as Divine prediction in course of accomplishment, we may safely say that, unless there be an attentive study of unfulfilled Prophecy, its fulfilment, when the prediction does really come to pass, will be very apt to escape our observation. When we have our eye steadily fixed on a certain point or region of the heavens, we easily discover the star which otherwise we should never have observed; and even so it is with the day-star of Prophecy. It was to them who, like the holy Simeon and the aged Anna, were “waiting for the consolation of Israel,” and “looking for redemption in Jerusalem²,” that “the day-spring from on high³” appeared, while others were yet sitting in darkness. We find our Lord expressly rebuking the men of that generation because, skilful as they were to “discern the face of the sky,” yet could they “not discern the signs of the times⁴.” And though, to the anxious inquiries of His disciples He denied all knowledge as to the precise time at which the things should come to pass which He had foretold⁵, He gave them, nevertheless, such clear tokens of His coming, that His followers were effectually guarded against the delusions of “false Christs and false prophets,” escaped securely out of the midst of the devoted city, and beheld in the signs that preceded, and the circumstances that attended its destruction, the coming of their Lord in His kingdom.

² Luke ii. 25, 38.

³ Chap. i. 78.

⁴ Matt. xvi. 3.

⁵ Acts i. 6, 7.

It is, doubtless, no easy matter thus to give ourselves to the study of Prophecy, with such attention as to discern clearly the “signs of the times,” and yet keeping ourselves free from any presumptuous determining of the times themselves. Undoubtedly, it were easier far to close the volume at once, and escape the danger of the abuse by practically denying the use. But this, on other subjects of thought and action, would be accounted no rational proceeding; much less, then, assuredly on this; independently even of its tendency to deprive us altogether of the blessing which, as we have seen, is expressly promised to such inquiry. And, looking back to different periods of the Church’s history, we find, in fact, that however men may have been misled, or have had their hopes too highly raised, or their imaginations unduly excited, by the approach of eras which it was supposed had been marked out in Prophecy for Christ’s coming and the end of the world; still it may be asserted generally, that the minds of men have rarely been thus stirred and awakened, save at times when God’s judgments were, indeed, in a more than ordinary manner, abroad in the earth, and great events were unfolding whether for good or for evil. And if, in modern times, speculation on prophetic dates has been, in many cases, too precise and positive; and if this or that conjuncture, which has been fixed upon for the fulfilment of such and such predictions, has passed by, and nothing has appeared; it were our wisdom not to allow the spirit of indifference or unbelief to cast, on that account, any thing like contempt upon the study of God’s most holy word because of man’s weakness or folly; not at least till it be seen and proved that the hand of God has *not* meanwhile been signally, though in

silence, moving on events towards their consummation, and by the very spirit of inquiry concerning them which He has awakened in the minds of His servants, been preparing them to recognize the accomplishment, when at length, in His appointed time, it shall really come.

We must proceed, however, to notice another danger which besets the interpretation of Prophecy, viz. that of following our own imagination in expounding its symbolic language, instead of deriving from the deep and accurate study of Scripture itself the clue which it supplies to its own meaning. For it will be found, upon an attentive examination, that there is a wonderful uniformity in the symbols and figures employed in sacred Prophecy, and that great light is thrown upon its hidden import by a diligent “comparing of spiritual things with spiritual⁶.” Especially important is this rule of interpretation as regards the concluding volume of Divine revelation, which in a very remarkable manner adopts and embodies the language of the Old Testament prophets, particularly Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. For, indeed, we find the Apocalypse continually bringing before us again the scenery of those earlier visions, with the images and objects which had been there described, as if resuming what they had broken off, or exhibiting events which were to correspond closely with those of that earlier dispensation to which they had immediately ministered. And thus are we reminded at every step that “no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation⁷”; that sacred Prophecy is indeed one great system, ex-

⁶ 1 Cor. ii. 13. Vide Preface to Woodhouse's Translation, &c. 1805, and “Anno-

tations on the Apocalypse,” 1828. Vide Note, Appendix.

⁷ 2 Pet. i. 20.

tending through a vast range of time, from the beginning to the consummation of all things, and yet, throughout its whole course, at perfect unity with itself, and bearing upon it, too plainly to be mistaken, the marks of one Divine Author. And, accordingly, if we would indeed discover its real meaning, and not impose upon it fancies of our own, we must so familiarize ourselves with its general manner of expression, as to obtain a kind of acquired perception, what or what manner of events and persons "the Spirit of Christ" in His prophetic word "did signify^s." We shall otherwise be in continual danger of giving to prophetic imagery a sense derived from the arbitrary associations of a merely human imagination, beyond, or at variance with, those which, it may be found, perhaps, are uniformly attached in Scripture to the particular symbol or metaphor with which we are concerned. And it requires but little experience of interpretations of Prophecy to be convinced, how easily, when some special period of history, some favourite subject of speculation, has taken possession of the mind, it finds in every page and line the clear reflection of the object that haunts it; giving perhaps to minute events and transient circumstances a prominence, which, on a more enlarged view of Revelation and its disclosures, would at once appear to be inconsistent with the scale and magnitude of its visions.

And the same deep and familiar acquaintance with the language of holy Scripture is necessary, in order to the determination of a question which will in every page be arising, in what degree the expressions which we find used in Prophecy are *figurative*

^s 1 Pet. i. 11.

and *symbolical*, and how far they are to be interpreted *literally*. Upon this point also there has of late years been a considerable reaction of opinion. From a spiritualizing system of interpretation which was extensively popular, and which applied every thing in Scripture Prophecy to the individual circumstances of the Christian life, the tide has, to a great extent, turned in favour of the most strict adherence to the letter; and the expectation, grounded thereon, of a visible fulfilment of promises which had been generally regarded as accomplished in the spiritual blessings bestowed in the Christian Church. The predictions in regard to which, in particular, the literal interpretation has of late years been most strenuously contended for, are those which refer to the restoration of the Jewish people, and to the personal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years. It has also been strongly maintained, with much force of learning and argument, in regard to the prophetic periods which had commonly been interpreted by modern expositors on the hypothesis that, in "prophetic" language, a *day* stands for a year. In both instances, in support of the literal interpretation is pleaded the consent of ancient interpreters; though, indeed, of the writers who in the present day maintain the literal sense in the former instance, it is to be observed that some absolutely reject, while others adopt and strongly maintain, it in the latter. These questions I mention at present only as examples to show, how necessary is a diligent and careful study of the language of prophetic Scripture generally, if we would hope to obtain any thing like a satisfactory result to our investigations. For while, with that great master of theological wisdom, our own learned and judicious

Hooker, we must “hold it for a most infallible rule in expositions of sacred Scripture, that, where a literal construction will stand, the farthest from the letter is commonly the worst⁹,” we must at the same time admit,—and in perfect consistency with the principle thus laid down,—that there is in the word of God a spiritual meaning which is only “spiritually discerned¹,” that under temporal images He is pleased to shadow out things spiritual; and that, while we adhere faithfully to the letter, we must seek by spiritual discernment to attain to the mind of the Spirit which is revealed under it².

And here, from speaking of the deep and wide study of prophetic Scripture as the best interpreter of its own peculiar language, I would go on to observe, in reference to that which, next to Scripture itself, is, on the principles of our Church, confessedly the safest guide to its interpretation,—I mean, the consent of Christian Antiquity,—that we can scarcely expect, in regard to Prophecy, to derive the same assistance from this source as on other points, such as the fundamental articles of the Christian Faith, to which, as handed down from one to another, the Fathers of the first centuries bear absolutely conclusive and incontrovertible witness. On matters of unfulfilled Prophecy we should hardly expect to find the same universal and public tradition; and thus some room would be left for individual opinion or conjecture to fill up the broad and general outline. The disclosures made to the first disciples had been by word of mouth; and there were reasons, it would appear, which made it ex-

⁹ Eccles. Pol. v. 59, 2.

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 14.

² Comp. Woodhouse, sup. cit. Vid. Note, Appendix.

pedient that these disclosures should not be committed to writing. "Remember ye not," says St. Paul to his Thessalonian converts, "that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth³ that he might be revealed in his time⁴." And the Apostle goes on to speak in terms full of mystery⁵. This, taken in connexion with the misapprehension into which, as we find, those early disciples had fallen, in regard to what the Apostle had declared to them concerning "the day of Christ," as though it were even then actually near at hand, would prepare us to find some variety and uncertainty resting on the early interpretations of the mysterious intimations of Prophecy. And this will appear the more natural, when we consider how it has ever been the procedure of Divine Wisdom to keep the future wrapt up in some degree of obscurity from the eyes of men; and, moreover, that the Christian Church, through the ages which have since elapsed, has had the advantage of witnessing the fulfilment, in part at least, of the Prophecies concerning the new dispensation and her own Divine and heavenly economy. Still, however, it will appear, that in the early Church there is to be found a general consent of interpreters, so far, at least, as regards the broad lines of Prophecy. And with respect more particularly to some prophetic descriptions, of which the almost universally received interpretation has recently been called in question, and to which I design on a future occasion to call your attention⁶,—the consentient opinion of Antiquity

³ τὸ κατέχον.

⁴ 2 Thess. ii. 5, 6.

⁵ Ver. 7. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only *he who now letteth* (will

let), until he be taken out of the way" (μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται).

⁶ Vid. inf. Lect. ii.

must be regarded as of irresistible force, inasmuch as it bears witness to the fulfilment of Prophecy attested by those who were actually living in the very midst of it. But, indeed, in regard to Prophecy generally, whether fulfilled or unfulfilled, great weight is to be attached to the consent of early times; especially when we consider how early in the course of Christian instruction, as it would appear from the instance already cited of St. Paul's teaching at Thessalonica, the prospect of the Church's future trials was unfolded to the new converts; and it certainly gives hope, in the present day, of greater agreement amongst expositors, when we find men, who differ widely on many points, unite nevertheless in appealing to Christian Antiquity for the interpretation of Scripture Prophecy.

And where early tradition forsakes us, we must look to the history of the Christian Church as our best interpreter. And here, again, our greatest security against error will be found in large views of the Divine procedure, and of the course of human things. We must read history, if I may so speak, in the spirit of true philosophy; watching principles in their germ; tracing their silent growth through ages; observing them rising to a head—broken off again perhaps, or thrown back—and then again after an interval re-appearing, or gathering fresh strength; the tendency of events in one direction, checked it may be for a while, and then all at once putting forth its power, and prevailing;—hidden elements bursting out suddenly, which yet, on a deeper view, may be found to have been long at work;—or, on the other hand, a gradual advance perceptible or discoverable, like the tide on the sea-shore, which, while we watch each ripple,

scarcely seems to be gaining ground, or may even appear to be retiring, and which yet, by the strong wave at intervals rising continually higher, shows that it is all the while steadily setting in:—it is only by thoughtful contemplation, such as this, of the tide of human affairs, and the ebb and flow in the fortunes of the Church of God, that we can discover what Lord Bacon has happily designated as “the springing and germinant accomplishment” of Prophecy. Only we must ever be on the watch for what to human eyes might seem less important circumstances; remembering that “the Lord seeth not as man seeth;” that His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways; that it is not the movements which most attract the notice of the world, that are most pregnant with important consequences to the world itself, much less to the Church of Christ⁷; that it was the stone cut out without hands, small in its origin, that smote the image on its feet, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth⁸; that it was the grain of mustard-seed, “the least of all seeds,” which became “the greatest among herbs—” a tree shooting out “great branches, so that the fowls of the air might lodge under the shadow of it⁹,” that it was the

⁷ “In the providential history of the world, prospective results are frequently in the inverse proportion of present appearances. How insignificant, for example, in the eyes of contemporaries, must have appeared the first rise of the *Ottoman* power; how tremendous, on the contrary, the overwhelming inundation of the *Moguls*! In the counsels of Providence, however, the Ottoman was des-

tinued to become ‘the scourge and terror of Christendom;’ while the Tartar deluge receded without injury to the Church of Christ, and has left scarcely a trace behind!”—Forster’s *Mahometanism Unveiled*, vol. i. p. 171, note.

⁸ Dan. ii. 35.

⁹ Matt. xiii. 31, 32; Mark iv. 30—32. Comp. Luke xiii. 18, 19.

“little horn” growing up among the rest, whose “look was more stout than his fellows,” and whose mouth spake “great things¹.”

I have endeavoured thus far to draw your attention to some considerations which, in the present day, seem specially to recommend a calm and thoughtful study of Divine Prophecy; pointing out at the same time the chief sources of error in the conduct of such inquiries, and the best means and aids towards the discovery of the truth. In the following Lectures I propose to examine in order the prophecies of Daniel and St. John; which, from their distinctive chronological character, supply, as it were, the outline which other predictions help to fill up; and, moreover, exhibit, in the most vivid delineation, those principal objects in the Prophecies “concerning the Christian Church” which were primarily in the view of the founder of this Lecture.

Of the spirit and temper of mind in which subjects like these should be approached, it is the less needful for me to speak at large, inasmuch as it is implied in what has been already said respecting the dangers which beset the study. We must come to it in the spirit of true charity, free from party feeling and from the bitterness of the controversial temper; with earnest zeal and love for the cause of Christ’s truth and of His holy Church, whether as it now exists in the earth, or as we trace its eventful history in past ages;—with true loyalty of affection, rejoicing in its prosperity and sympathizing with its sorrows. We must come casting away presumption, and self-confidence, and unsubdued curiosity concerning things yet future;—we must come with the

¹ Dan. vii. 8.

imagination controlled; with a mind free from prejudice; ready to receive with simplicity the revelations of Holy Writ, and using all diligence in the employment of the means afforded for its right interpretation. We must come with humble and lowly reverence for the Word of God; prepared to find in it things beyond our deepest thought and loftiest conception; and labouring to attain, by Divine grace, to that holiness and purity of heart and mind which may make us fit to receive the knowledge of heavenly mysteries. Above all, remembering from whom alone is to be obtained the grace of spiritual understanding, we must look to HIM continually for the light to guide our steps; and ever consecrate to Him all our labours by thankfulness for every degree of illumination or perception which He is pleased to vouchsafe to us.

The solemn season on which we are now entering in the holy services of the Church², seems to sound in our ears in deeper tones the words of mingled encouragement and warning which seal the blessing pronounced in the text on him “that readeth” and on them “that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein;—FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND.” And if the words were true and faithful then, much more to us now, whose lot is cast in these “latter days,” and upon whom “the ends of the world are come³.” “The time is” indeed “at hand;” and if the Church hath long waited for her Lord, and it seem as though He delayed His coming; if Faith and Hope are ready to fail, and Charity to wax cold; and the “scoffers,”

² Preached on Advent Sunday.

³ εἰς οὓς τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντησεν.—1 Cor. x. 11.

who, it was foretold, should come in the last days “walking after their own lusts,” shall begin to say with more presumptuous unbelief, “Where is the promise of the coming⁴?”—even, then, when there is least expectation, save in the watchful spirits of His faithful few, shall He come whom they patiently look for; and “blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching⁵.” “Behold, I come quickly,” He saith again, winding up the concluding scenes of the volume of His Revelation with the repetition of the blessing recorded in its earliest page—“Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. . . . And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. . . . And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man as his work shall be. . . . He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen.” And may His Church, and every one of her faithful children, have grace to say with His beloved disciple—“Even so, come, Lord Jesus⁶.”

To Him, “who is the faithful and true witness,” the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending,” “the first and the last⁷,” to Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, be ascribed all honour and glory, might, majesty, dominion, and power, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

⁴ 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

⁵ Luke xii. 37.

⁶ Rev. xxii. 7, 10, 12, 20.

⁷ Rev. iii. 14; i. 8; xxii. 13.

LECTURE II'.

DAN. ii. 44.

“ And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

IN proposing, on a former occasion, the course of inquiry on which we are now to enter, I mentioned among the considerations which seemed, at the present time especially, to recommend a calm and thoughtful study of Prophecy, the tendency, in the first place, of some recent inquiries to call in question interpretations which had seemed to be established by general—nay, almost universal—consent. Of this we have an instance in the prophetic vision which comes first before us, in the examination which I proposed to undertake of the prophecies of Daniel and St. John—I mean, the vision of the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign.

I need not, probably, recall to your recollection the description given of the image, nor the interpretation of its several parts,—the head of fine gold, the breast and the arms of silver, the belly and the

¹ Preached Jan. 9, 1842.

thighs of brass, the legs of iron, with the feet part of iron and part of clay—as denoting four kingdoms which should arise successively in the earth; and on the ruins of which the God of heaven would set up a kingdom, represented under the figure of “a stone, cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces . . . and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth².” The four kingdoms here described have been designated, in the expressive language of the learned Mede, the “**SACRED KALENDAR and GREAT ALMANACK of PROPHECY**,”—as being “a prophetical chronology of times measured by the succession of four principal kingdoms, from the beginning of the captivity of Israel until the mystery of God should be finished.” “Now these four kingdoms,” he observes further, “(according to the truth infallibly to be demonstrated, if need were, and agreeable both to the ancient opinion of the Jewish Church³, whom they most concerned, and to the most ancient and universal opinion of Christians⁴, derived from the times of the Apostles, until now of late some have questioned it,) are 1, the Babylonian; 2, that of the Medes and Persians; 3, the Greek; 4, the Roman⁵.” It was in reference to this last of the four kingdoms, that the ancient interpretation had, in Mede’s time, by “some of late” been questioned;

² Vv. 34, 35.

³ “Vide Targ. Habac. 3. 17.” Comp. p. 743. “That the Jews were of this opinion before our Saviour came; as appears in Jonathan Ben Uziel, the Chaldee Paraphrast, and by the fourth Book of Esdras,” &c.

And that Josephus understood the prophecy in the same way, is not less evident.—See Note, Appendix.

⁴ “Vide Cyril. Hieros. *κατηχ.* ε’. et Hieronymi locum infra citatum.”

⁵ Works, p. 654.

and when objections were brought against his own exposition of the Prophecy,—an exposition in accordance with the anciently received interpretation,—his answer was—“The Roman empire to be the fourth kingdom of Daniel, was believed by the Church of Israel both before and in our Saviour’s time; received by the disciples of the Apostles, and the whole Christian Church for the first four hundred years, without any known contradiction. And, I confess, having so good ground in Scripture, it is with me ‘tantum non articulus fidei,’ little less than an article of faith⁶.”

With a partial exception, which does in some sort set forth more strikingly the general consent, the statement of Mede is substantially correct. We find S. Ephrem Syrus in the fourth century, in his Commentary on the Book of Daniel, which has been published from the Syriac original since the time of Mede, interpreting the fourth kingdom to be the Greek; in order to which he divides the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, making them severally the second and the third⁷. This interpretation, which is in accordance with a gloss inserted in the Syriac version of the vision of the four beasts in the Book of Daniel⁸, is very fully and ably refuted by Theodoret, a bishop of the Syrian Church in the

⁶ Ibid. p. 736 (Epistle vi.). In this letter Mede designates “the four kingdoms in Daniel” as “The A, B, C of Prophecy.” Compare the Dissertation (pp. 711—716) “Regnum Romanum est quartum regnum Danielis.”

⁷ S. Ephr. Syri Op. tom. ii. (Syr. et Lat.) pp. 205, 206. (Romæ, 1740.)

⁸ Dan. vii. 3—6. “Et quatuor ingentes belluæ emerge-

bant è mari, eæque inter se diversæ. *Regnum Babyloniorum*. Prima similis erat leoni, &c. . . . *Regnum Medorum*. Bellua secunda similis erat urso, &c. . . . *Regnum Persarum*. Postea videbam aliam belluam pardo similem, &c. . . . *Regnum Græcorum*. Denique videbam in visione nocturna belluam quartam,” &c.

following century. Theodoret mentions it as the interpretation of some who had gone before him; and clearly shows, in refutation of it, that the kingdom of the Medes and Persians must be regarded as one; and that from the succession of empires it is manifest that the third kingdom is that of the Greeks, and the fourth the Roman⁹. With this exception in the Syrian Church, Mede's assertion, of the unanimous consent of the first four centuries in this interpretation, is fully borne out. And how general was that consent, may be gathered, still further, from the language employed by St. Jerome, in expounding Daniel's vision of the four beasts—a vision which has almost universally been regarded as identical, in its main outline, with this of the image. He speaks of it as what "*all* ecclesiastical writers" had "handed down," that the ten kingdoms were to rise out of the division of the *Roman* empire¹. St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, who flourished somewhat earlier in the same century, had made a similar assertion; for "that this (the fourth kingdom) is that of the Romans," he says, "*has been the tradition of the Church's interpreters*"². For as the first kingdom

⁹ Interp. in Dan. Op. tom. ii. pp. 567, 568. (ed. Paris, 1642.) ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν οὕτω τὴν ἐρμηνείαν τοῦ θεσπεσίου Δανιὴλ νενοήκαμεν· (he had explained the four kingdoms after the received manner) προσήκει δὲ καὶ ἐνίων τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν ἡρμηνευκότων τὰς δόξας εἰς μέσον παραγαγεῖν· οὕτω γὰρ ἐναργέστερον ἢ ἀλήθεια δειχθήσεται· τινὲς τοίνυν τῶν συγγραφέων κ. τ. λ.—See Note, Appendix.

¹ "Quartum quod nunc orbem tenet terrarum, imperium

Romanorum est, de quo in statua dicitur: 'Tibiæ ejus ferreæ,' &c. . . . Frustrà Porphyrius, &c. . . . Ergo dicamus quòd *omnes scriptores ecclesiastici tradiderunt*: in consummatione mundi, quando regnum destruendum est *Romanorum*, decem futuros reges, qui orbem Romanum inter se dividant . . ." —Hieron. Op. tom. iii. pp. 1100, 1101. (ed. Bened.)

² Τὸ θηρίον τὸ τέταρτον, βασιλεία τετάρτη ἔσται ἐν τῇ γῇ, ἣτις ὑπερέξει πάσας τὰς βασιλείας. ταύτην δὲ εἶναι τῶν

that became renowned was that of the Assyrians, and the second that of the Medes and Persians together, and after these, that of the Macedonians was the third, so the fourth kingdom now is that of the Romans³.”

With reference to the several Fathers who bear witness to this interpretation, I shall only remark—what is interesting to trace, and at the same time strongly confirms its correctness and truth,—that we find them recognizing, in the successive periods in which they severally wrote, the actual fulfilment of the prophetic description; as exhibited first in the strength, and then in the growing weakness of the empire under which they were themselves living. Thus Irenæus, in the second century, speaks of the division of the empire which then reigned, as a thing still future⁴. And so likewise Hippolytus, at the beginning of the third century, in reference to the fourth beast, with its teeth of iron and its nails of brass, says; “Who, then, are these but the Romans? which same is the iron,”—*i. e.* in the vision before us, of the image,—“the kingdom which now standeth. For its legs, saith he, are of iron. After this, then, what remaineth, beloved, save the toes of the feet of the image, wherein part shall be of iron and part of clay, being mixed one

Ῥωμαίων οἱ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ παραδεδώκασιν ἐξηγηταί.

³ S. Cyril. Hierosol. Catech. xv. Op. ed. Bened. p. 230. Cf. Catech. xii. p. 172.

⁴ “Manifestiùs adhuc etiam de novissimo tempore, et de his qui sunt in eo decem regibus, *in quos dividetur quod nunc regnat imperium*, significavit Joannes Domini discipulus

in Apocalypsi. . . . Et diligenter Daniel finem quarti regni digitos ait pedum esse ejus imaginis, quæ à Nabuchodonosor visa est, &c. . . . Ergo decem digiti pedum, hi sunt decem reges *in quibus dividetur regnum.*” — Iren. contra Hær. lib. v. cap. 26. 1. Op. pp. 323, 324, ed. Massuet.

with another⁵?" And again—"the legs of iron, the beast dreadful and terrible, are the Romans which now have dominion; the toes of the feet, iron and clay, the ten horns which are about to be⁶." This was written during the early years of the third century. But towards the end of the fourth, or at the beginning of the fifth century, we find St. Jerome, in his comment on the passage before us, speaking thus; "But the fourth kingdom, which *clearly pertains to the Romans*, is the iron which breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things. But its feet and toes are partly of iron, and partly of clay; which *at this time is most manifestly proved*. For as, in the beginning, nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker; when, both in civil wars and against divers nations, we need the help of other, barbarous tribes⁷." And the historian Sulpicius Severus, at the beginning of the fifth century, considered the predicted times of weakness and division in the empire to be now come; when "the Roman state" was, as he tells us, "administered now, not by one emperor, but by many, and they

⁵ Τίνες οὗτοι ἀλλ' ἢ Ῥωμαῖοι; ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ σιδηρός, ἢ νῦν ἐστῶσα βασιλεία αἱ κνῆμαι γὰρ αὐτῆς σιδηραῖ. Μετὰ γὰρ τοῦτο τί παρέρχεται, ἀγαπητέ, ἀλλ' ἢ τὰ ἔχνη τῶν ποδῶν τῆς εἰκόνης, ἐν οἷς μέρος μέντοι ἐστὶ σιδηροῦν, μέρος δέ τι ὀστράκινον, ἀναμεμιγμένον εἰς ἄλλα;—De Antichristo, c. 25. Op. p. 14. (ed. Fabric. Hamburg. 1716.)

⁶ Κνῆμαι σιδηραῖ, θηρίον ἔκθαμβον καὶ φοβερόν, Ῥωμαῖοι οἱ νῦν κρατοῦντες. Ibid. p. 15.

⁷ "Regnum autem quartum, quod *perspicuè pertinet ad Romanos*, ferrum est quod comminuit et domat omnia: sed pedes ejus et digiti ex parte ferrei, et ex parte sunt fictiles, quod *hoc tempore manifestissimè comprobatur*. Sicut enim in principio nihil Romano imperio fortius et durius fuit; ita in fine rerum nihil imbecillius: quando et in bellis civilibus, et adversum diversas nationes, aliarum gentium barbararum indigemus auxilio."—Hieron. Op. tom. iii. p. 1081. (ed. Bened.)

always, in arms or in policy, at variance among themselves." He goes on to say, "it is notorious that the Roman soil is occupied by foreign nations, either in rebellion, or always surrendering that which is committed to them, under the plea of peace: and we see barbarian tribes intermingled with our armies, cities, and provinces; and Jews, in particular, dwelling amongst us, and yet not adopting our manners⁸."

It must be admitted, I think, to add greatly to the force of the consentient judgment of these early writers, strong as it is in itself, that the empire in which they recognized the fulfilment of the Prophecy, was one under which they were actually living; and which thus to successive generations, in its gradual decline, identified itself continually more and more closely with the terms of the prophetic description.

We must here, however, consider another passage of St. Jerome, from which it would seem to have been inferred⁹ that he was among the first pro-

⁸ "Siquidem jam non ab uno imperatore, sed etiam à pluribus, semperque inter se armis aut studiis dissentientibus, res Romana administratur . . . Siquidem Romanum solum ab exteris gentibus aut rebellibus occupatum, aut de dentibus semper pacis specie traditum constat; exercitibusque nostris, urbibus atque provinciis permixtas barbaras nationes, et præcipue Judæos, inter nos degere nec tamen in mores nostros transire videamus."—*Sacr. Hist.* lib. ii. p. 67. (ed. Elzev. 1656.) See Note, Appendix.

⁹ Todd's *Donnellan Lec-*

tures, First Series ("Discourses on the Prophecies relating to Antichrist in the writings of Daniel and St. Paul," Dublin, 1840), p. 50, note. I am not quite sure that I have understood rightly the force of Dr. Todd's remark. He says: "St. Jerome supposed the division of the kingdom to have been begun in his own times, and he appears, from what he says in another place (*Præf. ad lib. xi. in Isaiam*), to have been among the first propounders of this opinion." The opinion, of course, could not have been propounded earlier, if the events on which that opinion was

pounders of the opinion in question. St. Jerome, doubtless, was among the first who had pointed out the weakness that, in his days, was discovering itself in that mighty empire which had claimed for itself the title of "Eternal;" and which, it might well be feared, would, in its pride, ill brook the notion of an approaching fall. His words are, "If, in the exposition of the image and its feet, and the division of the toes, I have interpreted the iron and clay of the Roman kingdom, which Scripture portends shall be first strong, then weak, let them not impute it to me, but to the prophet. For neither must we so flatter princes as that the truth of the Holy Scriptures be neglected, nor is a general disputation an injury to any individual¹." We know that, in the early ages of the Church, under the dominion of a hostile power, it was felt to be the part of Christian prudence and duty not to give needless occasion to heathen jealousy, ever ready to awake against a religion which seemed to be—what it really was, as described in the vision before us,—“a kingdom;” though “not” indeed “of this world²,” nor one which, with weapons such as the heathen wielded, would endanger Cæsar’s throne. But though, when the signs of internal weakness were making themselves manifest, St. Jerome thought it but due to the

formed, had indeed now only begun to take place. Dr. Todd does not mean that St. Jerome first taught that the Roman empire should be thus divided; for Irenæus, whom he had quoted just before in the same note, had taught the same.

¹ “Quòd si in expositione statuæ pedumque ejus, et digitorum discrepantia, ferrum et testam super Romano regno

interpretatussum, quod primum forte, dein imbecillum Scriptura portendit, non mihi imputent, sed Prophetæ. Neque enim sic adulandum est principibus, ut Sanctarum Scripturarum veritas negligatur, nec generalis disputatio unius personæ injuria est.”—Præf. in lib. xi. in Isaiam, Op. tom. iii. p. 285. (ed. Bened.)

² John xviii. 36.

truth of Scripture Prophecy to declare it openly, he was introducing no new opinion; he was but tracing the growing fulfilment of a prophetic vision which had by common consent been applied to the empire of Rome, and which was clearly seen to foretel the division of that empire, in the last stage of its existence, into ten kingdoms³. Among the contemporaries of St. Jerome, St. Chrysostom, who may be taken as representing the general sense of the Greek Church, gives the same exposition of the four kingdoms, or rather, takes it for granted⁴; and speaks, in particular, of the Roman empire as being in his time in some respects weak, in others stronger⁵. And St. Augustine, of the African Church, refers to Jerome's interpretation as a satisfactory vindication of those who had expounded the four kingdoms to be the Assyrian, the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman. "How fitly they have done this," says St. Augustine, "those who are desirous of knowing may read the presbyter Jerome's book upon Daniel, very carefully and learnedly written⁶." Theodoret

³ See Note, Appendix.

⁴ Presuming the reference to the four kingdoms to be unquestioned, St. Chrysostom simply asks, *Τίνος δ' ἕνεκεν τὴν αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν καλεῖ χρυσοῦν, τὴν δὲ τῶν Περσῶν ἀργυρᾶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Μακεδόνων χαλκῆν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων σιδηρᾶν καὶ ὀστρακίνην; ὅρα καταλλήλους τὰς ὕλας.*

⁵ *Ἡ δὲ Ῥωμαίων χρησιμωτέρα τε καὶ ἰσχυροτέρα, ὥστε μὲν τοῖς χρόνοις, διὸ καὶ ποδῶν τάξιν ἐπέχει. ἔστι δὲ αὐτῆς τὰ μὲν ἀσθενῆ, τὰ δὲ ἰσχυρότερα τοιοῦτο τὸ ἀλλόκοτον τῶν ἀμθρώπων.* He goes on to show how, from the abounding of ini-

quity, and love growing cold, enmities, and jealousies, and divisions arose, and thus the component parts of the body politic did "not cleave one to another, as iron is not mixed with clay."—Op. t. vi. p. 214.

⁶ "Quatuor illa regna exposuerunt quidam Assyriorum, Persarum, Macedonum, et Romanorum. Quàm verò convenienter id fecerint, qui nosse desiderant, legant presbyteri Hieronymi librum in Daniele, satis diligenter eruditèque conscriptum."—S. August. de Civ. Dei, lib. xx. c. 23. Op. tom. vii. p. 605. (ed. Bened.)

soon after, in the Eastern Church, strongly maintained, as we have already seen, the same interpretation; and from the fifth century down to the end of the sixteenth, this, which had been thus transmitted, with all but unanimous consent, from earlier times, established itself, in the general opinion of Christendom, as the undoubted interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision⁷.

But here I must take notice of an objection which has been brought against our appeal to Christian antiquity as sanctioning the interpretation thus commonly received. We are told that the application of the prophecy, by ancient Christian writers, "to the Roman empire, as it existed in their own times," "was almost always held in connexion with the opinion that the end of the world, and therefore the revelation of Antichrist, were at hand. The greater number of these particular applications of the prophecy," it is said, "are now of course refuted by the event; but commentators still cling to the general principle that the Roman empire is the object of the prediction; though they cannot even yet agree whether the prophecy extends beyond the first advent of the Lord, or whether, with the more ancient expositors, we are to consider it as referring particularly to the Roman empire in the state in which it is to exist at His second coming." "The ancient opinion," it is further admitted, "was in strict accordance with the letter of the prophecy, when it assumed that the fourth kingdom was not to come into the divided state represented by the feet and toes of the image, and by the mixture of iron and clay, until just before the second advent of

⁷ See Note, Appendix.

the Lord ; and the error of its advocates," we are told, "consisted chiefly in supposing this to have been fulfilled by the Roman empire,—an error which," it is alleged, "arose from the very natural prejudice of magnifying the events of their own days. But the modern opinion," it is objected, "assumes, that this prophecy has either been long ago fulfilled, or that its fulfilment has been going on for many centuries;" and therefore, we are told, the ancient commentators "are very unfairly quoted as agreeing with modern writers" in the general interpretation of the prophecy⁸.

In reply to this, I would contend, that any error under which the ancients may have laboured in regard to events yet future—for, doubtless, they knew not "the times and the seasons"—does not invalidate their testimony to such fulfilment of Prophecy as they witnessed in their own days ; unless, indeed, the one be essentially connected with the other, which in this instance is not the case. The times of Antichrist and of our Lord's second coming might be near at hand, or far off, and still the empire whose growing weakness they themselves saw might be the fourth monarchy, out of the ruins of which, as they assuredly believed, Antichrist would rise. Nor did they define the symbols of the prophecy so accurately—to the letter, nay rather in opposition to the letter ; for so indeed, as I shall endeavour to show, it would in reality have been—as to determine, in the way in which they are supposed to have done, the precise condition of the image in the vision, at the time when the stone should smite it. And though, doubtless, they looked to a still future

⁸ Todd, Discourses (First Series), pp. 49—51.

coming of Christ's kingdom for the *full* accomplishment of that complete destruction of the image which the prophetic vision described, they nevertheless interpreted the "stone being cut out without hands" to signify the mystery, already revealed, of Christ's holy incarnation and nativity, His miraculous conception and birth⁹, and the weakness of His kingdom at its beginning, when, with no aid of human power, it triumphed over kings and kingdoms, and filled the whole world¹. This dispensation, they fully believed, had then begun: the stone, rejected of the builders², — that "stumbling-stone and rock of offence," "disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God³" to be the mighty worker of the overthrow of this world's dominion—had been even now made manifest in the world; His kingdom had been already set up; and sooner or later the power that then was must fall before it. But *how soon* this was to be, or how long would be the process of that destruction, which, from the very nature of the imagery borrowed from things of earth, appeared in the vision to be instantaneous,

⁹ "In fine autem horum omnium regnorum auri, argenti, æris, et ferri, abscissus est lapis Dominus atque Salvator, sine manibus, id est, absque coitu et humano semine, de utero virginali."—Hieron. *in loc.* t. iii. p. 1081. S. Chrysost. *in loc.* t. vi. p. 215. καὶ ἐτμήθη ἄνευ χειρῶν· τὴν κατὰ σάρκα γέννησιν αἰνίσσεται.—Cf. Synops. Scripturæ Sac. *ibid.* p. 388. S. Ephr. Syr. t. ii. p. 206. Sulpic. Sev. lib. ii. p. 67, &c.

¹ Hieron. *in loc.* sup. cit. —"et contritis omnibus regnis factus est mons magnus, et implevit universam terram." St. Chrysostom refers to the

preaching of the Apostles, and the deeds and sufferings of the martyrs. καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ λίθος εἰς ὄρος μέγα· τὰ ἀποστολικά ῥήματα τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐπλήρωσεν ἅπασαν.—Cf. p. 217. καὶ γὰρ καὶ νῦν κατέτριψε τὰς βασιλείας. . . . ὅταν γὰρ ἴδῃς μάρτυρας, ἵνα τὸ πρόσταγμα ἐκείνου πληρωθῇ, τοῦτο ποιῶντας, καὶ πολλῶ μᾶλλον τὸν θάνατον ὑπομένοντας, ὅψει αὐτοῦ τὴν βασιλείαν, καὶ πῶς τὴν γῆν ἐνέπλησεν.

² Psal. cxviii. 22. Matt. xxi. 42. Acts iv. 11.

³ Isa. viii. 14; xxviii. 16. Rom. ix. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 6, 7.

—this surely does not essentially affect their interpretation. It was “in the days of those kings” whose successive dominion had been represented by the image—that is, of the four⁴; for no other kings have been mentioned;—it was “in the days of those kings,” that is, according to a common Hebraism, while one of them still lasted—(for they were to follow one another in succession, and to constitute, as it were, one series)—it was while the last of those four kingdoms held rule in the earth, that “the God of heaven” had set up that kingdom which should “never be destroyed, but,” in whatever manner and time, should “break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and stand for ever.”

Thus much concerning the ancient interpretation, which was handed down with such general consent from the early days of the Church, and which, I would maintain, is thus far identical, in its essential features, with that which has been most commonly received among ourselves. Its chief opponent in ancient times was Porphyry, the great adversary of Christianity in the third century; whose well-known object it was to destroy the evidence derived to Christianity from the Prophecies of the Old Testament, by endeavouring to prove that they were written after the events which they described; and in particular, in regard to the prophecies of Daniel, by asserting, in the face of the strongest evidence to the contrary, that they were a production of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes⁵. He set himself, therefore, laboriously to disprove the existence of any reference in them to the Roman em-

⁴ Vid. Note, Appendix.

Daniel. c. iii. pp. 1073, 1074.

⁵ Vid. S. Hieron. Præf. in Mede's Works, p. 743.

pire; admitting the second and third kingdoms to be, respectively, the Medo-Persian and the Macedonian, but making the fourth to be the Syrian and Egyptian kingdoms of the successors of Alexander. His arguments were solidly refuted by St. Jerome, as well as by Theodoret, as has been already mentioned; but, after twelve hundred years, they were revived again, to disturb the general agreement of Christian expositors in regard to this prophecy. "You will admire," says Mede, in answer to an objector, who contended that the fourth empire was the kingdom of Alexander's successors—"you will admire the expositions and evasions of Porphyry should be the same almost, yea in circumstances, with those of Junius, &c."—the writers, who had then "of late" brought into question the received interpretation⁶.

Of these writers, the most remarkable was Grotius—a man undoubtedly of great ability and extensive learning, but who was biassed, in his interpretation of Prophecy, by the scheme of union between Protestants and Romanists, on which, in his charitable desire of peace among Christians, he had strongly set his heart; and which made him anxious to disconnect altogether the prophecies concerning Antichrist from the scene of Roman dominion. The total failure of his attempt to apply the symbols of the fourth monarchy to the kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and Lagidæ has been fully exposed by Bp. Chandler and others. "No historian," as the Bishop well observes, "ever confined the Greek empire to Alexander's person, or made a distinct empire of the four kingdoms that arose upon his death⁷. Those kingdoms,

⁶ Works, p. 743.

⁷ Bp. Chandler's "Defence of Christianity," p. 99. "Daniel's own interpretation is so plain,

it may be added, had their very origin in division : they never formed one strong iron monarchy, but were originally nothing else but the fragments of Alexander's kingdom, "broken," as the prophet elsewhere describes it, and "divided toward the four winds of heaven⁸." Since, however, these kingdoms were succeeded by the Roman, this, on the hypothesis of Grotius, was the fifth monarchy. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, according to his interpretation, represented "the army of a people that were governed by their own free will, and obeyed no king ; a people whose origin was from a mountain, *viz.* the Palatine." He does,

that no unbiassed person can easily mistake in the empires he prophesies of. He is express in the number. There shall be *four kingdoms* ; and he counts the Babylonian, then in being, for the *first*. History tells us, The Medo-Persian broke, and succeeded, the Babylonian. The Greek empire came into the place of the Persian by conquest, and is therefore the *third*. No historian, &c. . . . The Greek was destroyed in its two latest branches, that of the Seleucides and Ptolemies, by the Roman, which is consequently the *fourth kingdom*, and answers in every respect to its *iron* character."

⁸ Dan. xi. 4. After saying, of the vision before us, that "its sense" is "clear in every article of it, and the corresponding history confessed and notorious," Mr. Davison adds in a note as follows : "This assertion which I make of the internal certainty and clearness of the prophetic sense, and the completion of it in the four

empires which have been named, is not shaken by the fact that there has been some difference of opinion as to the third and fourth kingdoms intended. The opinion which would make the reign of *Alexander's successors* a kingdom *distinct* from his, and thereby the *fourth*, can be reckoned nothing better than a mere mistake, inconsistent with the principles of the vision, and with the plainest ideas of the history of kingdoms. The dynasty, the name, the foundation and title, were all *Grecian*, derived from the *first* conqueror to the whole clan and body of his successors. The language of Appian, in the Proem to his History, when he speaks of the partition of this empire, is obviously the only correct and natural language that can be used upon the subject ;—*ἡς γε, καὶ διαλυθείσης εἰς πολλὰς σατραπείας, ἐπιπλεῖστον ἐξέλαμπε τὰ μέρη.* The kingdoms of the succession were *members* of the *same empire*, not a new fabric. Disc. xii. p. 490.

indeed, at the same time make the Roman empire to have been a type of the Gospel, “which, having its origin from heaven, grew from small beginnings to be of a vast extent⁹.” He considers also the words which declare the eternal duration of this kingdom to be applicable to the Roman empire, inasmuch as it was the seat of the Church¹; and, while he interprets the breaking in pieces of the gold and the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay, as having reference to the Roman conquests, he admits, concurrently with this, a “more sublime sense,” viz. that Christ would put an end to all earthly empires². These modifications, however, of the interpretation which Grotius would propose, scarcely serve to disguise its extraordinary character; and, indeed, to state the interpretation is almost sufficient for its refutation. Even the infidel writer³, who, early in the last century, set himself to defend Porphyry’s interpretation, seemed, as Bp. Chandler observed, to be himself “almost ashamed of this of Grotius⁴.” The

⁹ Grotius’ note is as follows : —*Donec abscissus est lapis de monte sine manibus*] Exercitus populi qui suæ esset spontis, nullique Regi pareret : cujus populi origo à monte, nempe Palatino. Vide Virgilium libro viii. *Æneidos*, Livium libro i. *Idem lapis et filius hominis*. Gessit autem in hac re Imperium Romanum non obscurum typum Evangelii, quod ortum de cœlo ab exiguis initiis in immensum crevit.

¹ “Imperium Romanum perpetuò mansurum, quod sedes erit Ecclesiæ.” He adds, “*Ecclesia in Imperio Romano*, ait Optatus, nempe maxima ex parte.” See Note, Appendix.

² “Sensus sublimior, Christum finem impositurum omnibus imperiis terrestribus, 1 Cor. xv. 24.”

³ Collins.

⁴ It deserves consideration, I think, whether the words of our Blessed Lord in Matt. xxi. 44 (cf. Luke xx. 18), in the latter part of the verse, rendered in our Version, “on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder,” do not contain such an allusion to the description of the stone in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, as would determine, beyond all controversy, its reference to Himself. Vid. Note, Appendix.

interpretation, however, which applies the symbols of the fourth monarchy to the successors of Alexander, has still its supporters among the critics of Germany⁵: but it is the less necessary to say more respecting it, as it seems now to have no advocates amongst ourselves.

I would direct your attention, however, for a few moments, to some objections which have been recently urged, with much plausibility of argument and force of learning, against the received interpretation; and which would call in question, to a greater extent than any theory hitherto proposed, the application of the several symbols which has been commonly adopted. The objections in question have arisen out of the revival, of late years, of the doctrine of a future kingdom of Christ to be set up visibly in the earth, previously to His second advent in glory; and since the coming of this kingdom, which is understood by the stone smiting the image on its feet, is to take place, we are told, while the fourth empire is still in existence, it is argued that that empire cannot be the Roman, which has long since passed away. The symbols of the second and third monarchies are, on this system, by some at least of its supporters, transferred respectively from the Medo-Persian and the Macedonian, to the Macedonian and the Roman; the Medo-Persian being merged in the first of the four kingdoms, the Babylonian. It is argued in defence of this new arrangement of the prophetic symbols, that “the Babylonian empire was not *destroyed* or *essentially altered*,” when Darius the Mede “took the kingdom,” or, as it is elsewhere said, “was made king over the realm of

⁵ Vid. Note, Appendix.

the Chaldæans;" that Babylon was not destroyed, but was continued as the seat of government; that the Persian monarch, a hundred years after the time of Cyrus, Artaxerxes, is by Nehemiah called simply "the king of Babylon;" that "the empire remained, therefore, one and the same;" and that "even the subsequent removal of the seat of government from Babylon to Persia, which had been one of the provinces, did not cause the empire to lose its identity." It is contended further, that the second kingdom cannot be the Persian; because it was not "inferior" to the first—for that it "never was less, but equal to, or greater than, the kingdom of the Chaldæans founded by Nebuchadnezzar;" that the Grecian empire of Alexander, "while it answers the characteristic of the *second* already mentioned, (namely, inferiority to the preceding,) does not answer the characteristic of the *third*, of which, and of which only, it is declared that it 'shall bear rule over all the earth;'" and that this last "characteristic of universal sovereignty, which does not apply to the Grecian empire, *does* apply, if not exclusively, at least with peculiar propriety, to the Roman^a." Still further it is objected, that the character here given of the fourth monarchy does not correspond with that of Rome; that "destructiveness" was "no characteristic of the Roman power;" that "the Romans were remarkable for moderation, for toleration, and for gentle government of the nations that submitted to their sway;" that "the decline and fall of the Roman empire were slow and gradual^b,"—not like

^a Lacunza, as summed up in Maitland's "Attempt to elucidate the Prophecies concerning Antichrist," p. 4, quoted by

Todd, p. 79, Note.

^b Todd, p. 83.

^c Ibid. p. 57.

the destruction described in the vision, “sudden, complete, and probably miraculous,” the “immediate consequence” of the fall of the stone on the image⁹; —that the progress of Christianity “hitherto has been accompanied by no sudden or rapid revolution, at all analogous to the fall and dissipation of the image¹”; and that this cannot be understood to refer to “the first preaching of Christianity, its great and wonderful progress in the world, and the overthrow of Heathenism,” because then “paganism, and not the Roman empire, would be the fourth kingdom².” It is objected still further, that the Roman empire cannot be said in any sense to have owed its fall to Christianity; and moreover, that if “the toes of the image indicated the ten kingdoms into which, as the great majority of expositors tell us, the Roman empire was divided,” and “this division of the empire did not take place, until after the establishment of Christianity,” the imagery of the vision is not satisfied³. And, finally, it is argued, that Christianity, in its past or present state, can scarcely, “with any strict propriety of speech, be called *a kingdom* ;” or, at least, that it must be “in a very different sense from that in which we use” the term “when we speak of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, of Cyrus, or of Alexander ;” or, if it is to be admitted that the word is elsewhere “used in this figurative sense,” as “applicable to the Christian religion,” we are asked, “is it fair to consider it as so used here,” “taking the same word in two such different significations almost in the same sentence⁴?” Whilst, on these grounds, the application of the symbols of the fourth

⁹ Todd, pp. 53, 54.

¹ Ibid. p. 57.

² Ibid. p. 55.

³ Ibid. p. 56.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 59, 60.

monarchy to the Roman empire is altogether disputed, there is, at the same time, a difference of opinion amongst the objectors in regard to its positive interpretation; the first proposer of this view⁵ of the prophecy understanding the fourth monarchy to be the kingdoms of modern Europe; whereas those who have adopted it among ourselves, interpret it of a future kingdom of Antichrist⁶.

The objections thus alleged seem formidable, in their combination, and I have put them together, in order to give them their full force; but they all, I think, admit of a satisfactory answer. With regard, in the first place, to the Medo-Persian empire in relation to the Babylonian, the general impression—derived from the prophecies which describe the fall of Babylon and the conquests of the Persian⁷; or from the separate symbols employed in the book of Daniel, especially in the vision of the ram and the he-goat⁸; or again, from ancient historians, such as Herodotus, Xenophon, or Justin, or the ordinary histories which are in every one's hands,—would certainly be that the Medes and Persians founded a new and distinct kingdom in the world⁹. And, with reference to the *inferiority* of this empire to the Babylonian, we must observe, that it has been commonly explained of inferiority in wealth and splendour, or in internal strength, or the character of its kings, rather than in mere extent of dominion; though, even in

⁵ Lacunza. See Todd, p. 68, and Note.

⁶ Dr. Maitland “cannot agree with Lacunza” on this point, and suspects “that the fourth empire is not yet come into existence.” Dr. Todd pronounces the same opinion more

strongly, pp. 61, 62. 84, 85.

⁷ Comp. Isa. xxi. 1. 10. Jer. l. and li., &c.

⁸ Dan. viii. 3, 4. 20.

⁹ Theodoret certainly entertained no doubt on this point. Vid. sup. cit. p. 27, and Note, Appendix.

this respect it was inferior; if it be true, as the historians referred to by Bp. Newton¹ report, that Nebuchadnezzar carried his arms into Spain and Africa. And, as regards the third kingdom, the description of its bearing “rule over all the earth,” seems to correspond closely with the terms in which the Macedonian conqueror is described in the 11th chapter², as a “mighty king” that should “stand up,” and “rule with great dominion;” or again, in the first book of Maccabees, where we read how he “slew the kings of the earth, and went through to *the ends of the earth*, and took spoils of many nations, inso-much that *the earth* was quiet before him³.” And, in the passages which have been quoted by expositors from ancient historians, we are told how that, “having received empire, he commanded that he should be called King of all lands and of *the world*;” and that ambassadors came to him from *almost all the habitable world*, to congratulate him upon his success, or to submit to his empire: “and then especially,” says the historian, did “Alexander appear, both to himself and to those about him, to be *master both of the earth and sea* ⁴.” I do not dwell upon the vision of the four beasts, which has generally been regarded as parallel with the vision before us; because this also has lately been disputed⁵, and I propose to con-

¹ Dissert. xiii. 1, 2. Vol. i. pp. 410. 412 (ed. 1759).

² Ver. 3.

³ 1 Macc. i. 2, 3. This passage is referred to in the marginal references on the words in ver. 39, concerning the third kingdom, “which shall bear rule over all the earth.”

⁴ Bp. Newton, Diss. xiii. 3. pp. 413, 414.

⁵ Lacunza, ap. Todd, p. 78,

Note, who, differing from him in the interpretation of the vision of the four beasts, is, at the same time, “disposed to believe that the first three beasts are not to be considered identical with the gold, the silver, and the brass of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, although,” he adds, “the fourth beast is undoubtedly the iron or fourth kingdom (p. 77).”

sider this question on a future occasion; but there also, it is emphatically said of an empire which, I think, may clearly be identified with the Macedonian, “*dominion* was given unto it⁶.”

Thus, then, we are brought, through the succession of empires, to that which came into the place of the Macedonian, *viz.* the Roman. And surely in the dominion of Rome the general consent of mankind would recognize the characteristics which the vision assigns to the fourth kingdom. The infidel historian, who, it will be allowed, had well studied the genius and character of the Roman empire, and who had certainly no prejudice in favour of Inspired Prophecy, has told us how, from their “institutions of peace and war,” an ancient historian had “deduced the spirit and success of a people, incapable of fear, and impatient of repose⁷ ;” how “the ambitious design of conquest, which might have been defeated by the reasonable conspiracy of mankind, was attempted and achieved; and the perpetual violation of justice was maintained by the political virtues of prudence and courage. The arms of the republic,” he tells us, “sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the Ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to repre-

⁶ Dan. vii. 6. St. Chrysostom undoubtedly identifies the two visions with each other, and both of them with Alexander's empire. On the vision before us he says, καὶ βασιλεία τρίτη ἢ ἐστὶν ὁ χαλκὸς ἢ κυριεύει πάσης τῆς γῆς. τοιαύτη γὰρ ἡ Μακεδόνων ἐγένετο. Opp. t. vi. p. 216. And on the vision of the four beasts,

εἶτα, φησὶ, πάρδαλις, Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ τῶν Μακεδόνων βασιλεὺς, πᾶσαν διαπτάς τὴν οἰκουμένην. οὐδὲν γὰρ τούτου γοργότερον, οὐδὲ ὀξύτερον γέγονεν, ἀλλὰ σφοδρός τις ἦν καὶ ὀξύς, καθάπερ τοῦτο τὸ θηρίον. . . . εἶδες αὐτοῦ τὴν ταχύτητα; . . . πᾶσαν διέδραμε τὴν οἰκουμένην.—p. 238.

⁷ Polybius.

sent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the *iron*⁸ monarchy of Rome⁹." He refers, in a note, to the prophecy before us; observing that "the remainder of the prophecy (the mixture of iron and *clay*⁸) was accomplished, according to St. Jerome, in his own time¹." The passage referred to from Jerome has already been quoted², and the historian does not question its correctness. But the character of the Roman, in the view of that Divine and omniscient Spirit with whose word we have to do, seems to be drawn, in colours very similar to those before us, in the book of Deuteronomy. We find described there "a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young³." There was indeed "moderation," doubtless,—but there was withal relentless tyranny concealed behind it; there was "toleration,"—yet, as the Christians found, Rome could be a bitter persecutor; "there was gentle government of the nations that submitted to their sway"—but, withal, an iron sceptre for those that submitted not.

"Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
Hæ tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos⁴."

⁸ The italics are the historian's own.

⁹ Decline and Fall. "General Observations on the Fall of the Roman Empire in the West," subjoined to chap. 38. vol. iii. pp. 630, 631. (ed. 4to.) It has been said, that writers on prophecy are apt to quote Gibbon for what is, after all, merely rhetoric and metaphor: but, in the instance before us, it is something much more.

¹ "See Daniel ii. 31—40.

'And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as *iron*,' " &c.

² Vid. sup. p. 29, Note 7.

³ Deut. xxviii. 50.

⁴ Virg. *Æn.* vi. 852—854. Heyne's note on the last line is to our purpose. 'Parcere subjectis;' nam volebant Romani videri clementes et moderati erga victos, et erga socios benigni et liberales; scilicet si nihil ab ipsis metuerent, et ab opibus eorum auctis utilitatem sibi ipsis promittere possent."

It was “strong as iron ; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things : and as iron that breaketh all these,” did it “break in pieces and bruise ⁵.”

But, as the prophet went on to declare⁶, the kingdom was to be “divided.” He is not here speaking, it would appear, of the division into the separate kingdoms, which are commonly supposed to be represented by the toes on the feet of the image ; but of the division of the *component materials* of the feet, “part of iron and part of clay”—describing a kingdom “partly strong and partly broken,” or rather, as it is in the margin, “brittle⁷.” “Whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided ; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men : but they shall not

⁵ Davison well observes, “We must take notice that one especial object in the prediction is the *superior strength*, the *paramount solidity and force* of their empire, as compared with the others which had preceded it. Theirs was to be ‘the iron power, breaking down, and bruising all things.’ So it was foretold ; so it was. The solid and well-cemented fabric of its military despotism, the overwhelming force, and the continued impression, of its reiterated wars and victories, held the world in stronger chains, and subdued it to a more hum-

bled subjection, than had been inflicted by the force of any of the older masters and destroyers, to whom God had permitted the usurpation of a wide-ruling conquest. Those legions were truly ‘the breaking and bruising engines,’ the massive iron hammers of the earth.” Lect. xii. pp. 499, 500.

⁶ The remainder of the objections already enumerated, will best be examined in pursuing the investigation of the vision.

⁷ Chald. תְּבִירָה.

cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay⁸." We have seen St. Jerome's illustration of this description, drawn from the actual state of the empire, as he saw it in his own days; and the modern historian of its decline and fall traces very clearly the element of weakness mingling with its greatest strength. In a passage which has been expressly cited to prove Rome's moderation, and that "not the extermination of the conquered, but their civilization and incorporation into the Roman name, was the ultimate end of Roman government"⁹—he tells us, "The republic gloried in her generous policy, and was frequently rewarded by the merit and services of her adopted sons¹." "The same salutary maxims of government, which had secured the peace and obedience of Italy, were extended to the most distant conquests. A nation of Romans was gradually formed in the provinces, by the double expedient of introducing colonies, and of admitting the most faithful of the provincials to the freedom of Rome²." And this undoubtedly seemed to be a principle of permanency and strength. "The narrow policy," says the historian, "of preserving, without any foreign admixture, the pure blood of the ancient citizens, had checked the fortune, and hastened the ruin, of Athens and Sparta. The aspiring genius of Rome sacrificed vanity to ambition, and deemed it

⁸ Dan. ii. 41—43.

⁹ Todd, p. 83, Note. "And this character of Roman government," adds Dr. Todd, "which had reached its highest perfection in the Augustan age, is mentioned by historians as among the most influential of the secondary causes which facilitated the rapid spread of

Christianity. The observation," says Dr. Todd, "is as old as Origen, who uses it to refute an objection of Celsus." He then cites *Contra Cels.* lib. 2. 30. (Op. ed. Benedict. tom. i. p. 412, D.)

¹ *Decline and Fall*, chap. 2. vol. i. p. 42.

² *Ibid.* p. 43.

more prudent, as well as honourable, to adopt virtue and merit for her own wheresoever they were found, among slaves or strangers, enemies or barbarians³."

And thus then did the proud Romans, the iron conquerors of the world, "mingle themselves with the seed of men," the potter's clay. Italy first was associated and adopted into Rome. "From the foot of the Alps to the extremity of Calabria, all the natives of Italy," says the historian, "were born citizens of Rome. Their partial distinctions were obliterated, and they insensibly coalesced into one great nation, united by language, manners, and civil institutions, and equal to the weight of a powerful empire⁴." It might almost have been thought that the historian, when he wrote this, had before his eyes the image in Nebuchadnezzar's vision;—the feet of iron, as men might have deemed, fully equal to the weight they bore of the colossal image of earthly dominion. And the union of internal elements in the fabric of the Roman empire seemed to be perfect. The colonies, we are told, "were soon endeared to the natives by the ties of friendship and alliance; they effectually diffused a reverence for the Roman name, and a desire, which was seldom disappointed, of sharing, in due time, its honours and advantages." "The grandsons of the Gauls, who had besieged Julius Cæsar in Alesia, commanded legions, governed provinces, and were admitted into the senate of Rome⁵. Their ambition, instead of disturbing the tranquillity of the state, was intimately connected with its safety and

³ Decline and Fall, chap. 2. vol. i. p. 40. Gibbon refers, in a note, to Tacit. Annal. xi. 24, and adds, "The Orbis Romanus of the learned Spanheim, is a complete history of

the progressive admission of Latium, Italy, and the provinces, to the freedom of Rome."

⁴ Ibid. p. 42.

⁵ Tacit. Annal. xi. 23, 24. Hist. iv. 74.

greatness⁶.” “Domestic peace and union were the natural consequences of the moderate and comprehensive policy embraced by the Romans.” “The vanquished nations,”—says the historian, contrasting Rome with the “monarchies of Asia,” where we “behold despotism in the centre, and weakness in the extremities;”—“the vanquished nations, blended into one great people, resigned the hope, nay even the wish, of resuming their independence, and scarcely considered their own existence as distinct from the existence of Rome⁷.” “The empire of Rome,” he tells us, “was firmly established by the singular and perfect coalition of its members.” So, indeed, it seemed to outward appearance. “But this union was purchased,” the historian goes on to say, “by the loss of national freedom and military spirit; and the servile provinces, destitute of life and motion, expected their safety from the mercenary troops and governors, who were directed by the orders of a distant court.” Here then was disunion beginning. They could “not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” And a stroke was ready to fall upon the feet of iron and clay. “*The deepest wounds*,” says the historian, “were inflicted on the empire during the minorities of the sons and grandsons of Theodosius; and, after those incapable princes seemed to attain the age of manhood, they abandoned the Church to the bishops, the state to the eunuchs, and the provinces to the barbarians⁸.”

“They abandoned the Church to the bishops”—for in “the days of those kings” of the fourth and last

⁶ Gibbon, vol. i. pp. 44, 45. &c., subjoined to chap. 38.

⁷ Ibid. p. 52. vol. iii. pp. 635, 636.

⁸ “General Observations,”

empire had “the God of heaven set up” His “kingdom” under its Divinely appointed rulers;—and the very next sentence of the historian bears witness that Rome was indeed thus the last of the universal monarchies of old time. For he goes on to show how Europe, unlike the ancient Roman world, is now divided into numerous kingdoms, commonwealths, and states; how thereby “the abuses of tyranny,” such as imperial Rome could exercise without control, “are restrained;” how “republics have acquired order and stability; monarchies have imbibed the principles of freedom, or, at least, of moderation; and some sense of honour and justice is introduced into the most defective constitutions by the general manners of the times⁹.” And how much of this, it may well be asked, do we not owe to the silent influence, upon the world, of the kingdom of Christ? And if it be inquired in what sense it can be said that Christianity was an instrument in the overthrow of the Roman empire¹, we may appeal again to the testimony of the historian, whose language at every page painfully reminds us, all the while, of his own unbelief. He will tell us, in his sarcastic manner, that “as the happiness of a *future* life is the great object of religion,”—yes, indeed; for the kingdom of “the God of heaven” is spiritual and eternal, a kingdom “not of this world,” “the kingdom of heaven,”—“we may hear, without surprise or scandal,”—I am quoting the historian’s own words—“that the introduction, or at least the abuse, of Christianity, had some influence on the decline and fall of the Roman empire.” He scoffingly tells us of the preaching of its “doctrines of patience and,”

⁹ Ibid. p. 636.¹ Cf. *supr.* p. 42.

as he terms it, “pusillanimity;” of “the active virtues of society discouraged,” and “the last remains of the military spirit buried in the cloister;” while yet, in the midst of all this weakness relaxing and softening the iron, there was unseen strength,—the strength of the stone cut out from the mountain. “The pure and genuine influence of Christianity,” says the infidel, now speaking seriously, “may be traced in its beneficial, though imperfect, effects on the barbarian proselytes of the North;” and “if the decline of the Roman empire,” he says, “was *hastened by the conversion of Constantine*, his victorious religion *broke the violence of the fall*, and mollified the ferocious temper of the conquerors².”

The historian acknowledges the greatness of that overthrow; he speaks of it as a “fall,” as “an awful revolution;”—and he also clearly recognizes in it the influence of the new religion and polity which had then appeared in the world. “A candid but rational inquiry,” he tells us, “into the progress and establishment of Christianity, may be considered as a very essential part of the history of the Roman empire. While that great body,” he observes, “was invaded by open violence, or *undermined by slow decay*, a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and obscurity, derived new vigour from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the cross on the ruins of the Capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity,” he proceeds, “confined to the period or to the limits of the Roman empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries, that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe, the most distinguished portion of human kind in arts and learning

² Gibbon, vol. iii. pp. 632, 633.

as well as in arms. By the industry and zeal of the Europeans," he says,—for, of course, he was determined to own no higher than mere human causes,—“it has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and by the means of their colonies has been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the ancients³.” What more striking comment could have been given of the prophet’s words, describing how “the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole world?”

I have traced thus fully the progress of Rome’s decline and fall in the words of its infidel historian, the rather because, as he traces the course of the history, he seems undesignedly to give a running comment on the language of the Prophecy. And if the interpretation which I have endeavoured to establish be well founded, the internal causes of weakness in the later empire, it will be observed, are not less clearly marked in the vision, than is the external influence of Christianity; and we are, moreover, free from all difficulty arising out of the consideration that the division of the empire into ten kingdoms was subsequent to the establishment of the Christian Church. It may be remarked that, in the original description of the image, the *feet* only are mentioned⁴: and it was “upon the *feet* of iron and clay,” not upon the toes of the feet, that the stone smote the image⁵. The state of the kingdom, there-

³ Decline and Fall, chap. 15. *init.*

⁴ Dan. ii. 33. “His legs of iron, his *feet* part of iron and part of clay.”

⁵ Ver. 34. “Thou sawest

till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his *feet* that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.”

fore, denoted by the image at the time when the stone fell upon it, I conceive, was *prior* to that in which it appeared, when, out of the ruins of the fallen empire, ten kingdoms were to rise into greatness,—a condition described in another vision under the imagery of the ten horns of the fourth beast⁶—the revived existence of the ancient empire, under a new form of earthly dominion. This would seem to belong to a later period in the history of the world and the Church; the toes of the feet of the image, the ten provinces of the Roman empire in the East and the West (for so I should be disposed to understand the symbolic representation) forming, as it were, the basis, left amid the ruins of fallen greatness, on which, in after time, “an image” was to be raised up to the power that had once received the deadly wound, and yet “did live’.”

Upon this hypothesis the objections which have been urged against the received interpretation, will, I think, altogether disappear. The stone “smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay,” when the power of Christ and of His religion came upon the Roman empire, in the East and the West, when now it was in its apparent strength but incipient weakness; barbarous tribes being mingled with its people, and the vigour of its institutions relaxed, its original discipline corrupted, and the native character of its citizens gone. It overthrew the old Paganism, which had been the sustaining power of Rome, its animating principle from the beginning⁸; and brake in pieces this last empire, the feet of the great image of ancient dominion; destroying, in the empire which sustained the weight of all the former

⁶ Vid. inf. Lect. iii.

⁷ Rev. xiii. 14.

⁸ Machiavelli, Discourses on Livy, Lib. i. cap. 11, 12.

and included them all, “the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold,” which were “broken to pieces together,” and made “like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth⁹.”

What if the work of destruction took centuries to accomplish, while in the vision it seemed all effected in a moment¹? What if the progress of Christ’s kingdom have seemed slow, and “we see not yet all things put under him²?” Yet has not “Christianity” been still, in reality, “always progressive³?” and shall not He who is “the blessed and only Potentate” at length finally “put down all rule and all authority and power⁴?” Verily “the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof” by the mouth of His prophet “sure⁵.” “But, beloved,” saith His Apostle, “be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance⁶.”

There remains but one point,—on which I must not at present enlarge, though, indeed, it would admit of much illustration both from Scripture and

⁹ Dan. ii. 35.

¹ Vid. supr. pp. 41, 42.

² Heb. ii. 8.

³ To those who are acquainted with the able and graphic outline sketched by the masterly hand of the late lamented Hugh James Rose, in his Chris-

tian Advocate’s publication for 1829, I need not point the reference to his deeply interesting volume, “Christianity always progressive.”

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 24.

⁵ Dan. ii. 45.

⁶ 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

from history—I mean the sense in which the Christian dispensation can be described as “a kingdom” “set up” in the world⁷. But here, again, once more I shall appeal to the testimony undesignedly borne by the historian of Rome’s decline and fall, who wrote assuredly with no purpose of vindicating the language of Sacred Prophecy. Among the causes which he assigns for the “growth of Christianity,” he tells us how “a separate society which attacked the established religion of the empire, was obliged to adopt some form of internal *policy*, and to appoint a sufficient number of ministers, intrusted not only with the spiritual functions, but even with the *temporal* direction of the *Christian commonwealth*⁸.” “Every society”—that is, each Church, under its spiritual ruler,—“formed within itself,” he tells us, “a separate and independent republic;” these numerous “*little states*” maintaining “a mutual as well as friendly intercourse;” until, in due time, “a regular correspondence was established between the provincial councils . . . and the catholic church soon assumed the form, and acquired the strength, of a *great federative republic*⁹.” Such is the historian’s description. And it was this which made the Christians an exception to the universal toleration which distinguished Rome as “the capital of a great monarchy,” “incessantly filled with subjects and strangers from every part of the world, who all,” we are told, “introduced and enjoyed the favourite superstitions of their native country.” For “Roman policy,” we are reminded by the same authority, “viewed with the utmost jealousy and distrust any *association* among its subjects;” and “the religious assemblies of the

⁷ Vid. supr. p. 42.

§ 5. vol. i. p. 581.

⁸ Decline and Fall, chap. 15.⁹ Ibid. pp. 586, 587.

Christians, who had separated themselves from the public worship, were illegal in their principle, and in their consequences might become dangerous.” “The extent and duration of this *spiritual confederacy*,” says the historian, “seemed to render it every day more deserving of” the “animadversion” of the magistrate. For “the active and successful zeal of the Christians,” we are told, “had insensibly diffused them through every province and almost every city of the empire. The new converts seemed to renounce their family and country, that they might connect themselves, in an *indissoluble band of union*, with a peculiar *society*, which every where assumed a different character from the rest of mankind¹.” “The Christians,”—says the historian, speaking of the time when the question how Christianity should be treated was agitated in the councils of Diocletian,—“The Christians (it might speciously be alleged), renouncing the gods and the institutions of Rome, had constituted a *distinct republic*, . . . which was already governed by its own laws and magistrates, was possessed of a public treasure, and was intimately connected in all its parts by the frequent assemblies of the bishops, to whose decrees their numerous and opulent congregations yielded an implicit obedience².”

Such was the idea which, the unbeliever himself being witness, the heathen might derive from what he saw in the earth of the “kingdom” set up by the God of heaven. It was not a mere body of doctrines, a system of abstract philosophy, a code of moral precepts, that the Author of the new religion had introduced into the world. He had “set up” a visible

¹ Chap. 2. p. 39. chap. 16.
pp. 628, 629.

² Ibid. pp. 681, 682.

Church, had appointed over it rulers and ministers, and had instituted outward rites by which men were to be admitted into the new society, and to be privileged to partake of its benefits. And the records of the Gospel history exhibit prominently this Divine polity. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," was the announcement of John the Baptist and of our Lord Himself³; "the time is fulfilled, *the kingdom of God* is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel⁴." The period at which it appeared was precisely that when the Roman empire was now firmly established, and the decree which went forth from Cæsar Augustus declared that "all the world⁵" was under his sway. Then did HE come down from heaven, who was destined to have the dominion of the whole earth. And though, before the tribunal of the Roman governor, He declared "My kingdom is not of this world . . . now is my kingdom not from hence," yet, when "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a King then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth⁶." And because He made Himself a King, He was treated as an enemy of Cæsar; and the superscription on His cross testified that He was crucified as a King, "the King of the Jews⁷."

And not of the Jews only was He to be King, but also of the Gentiles, "yes, of the Gentiles also⁸." And we, of the furthest isles of the Gentiles, once barbarians, scarcely counted part of the Roman world, have been made subjects of the kingdom which

³ Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17.

⁴ Mark i. 15.

⁵ Luke ii. 1.

⁶ John xviii. 36, 37.

⁷ Chap. xix. 19—22.

⁸ Rom. iii. 29.

hath “filled the whole earth⁹.” May its heavenly origin and its Divine power be not only, in true faith, acknowledged by us, but also seen and felt, more and more, continually, in us! May the power of that kingdom, unseen yet mighty, so imparted to us, “break in pieces and consume” in us every thing of earth—the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay, and “set up” within us that which “shall never be destroyed,” but shall “stand for ever!”

⁹ [Preached on the first Sunday after Epiphany.]

LECTURE III.¹

DAN. vii. 26, 27.

“ But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

THERE is nothing more remarkable in the structure of Sacred Prophecy, than the manner in which one prophetic vision takes up and continues another. Expositors have pointed out, in several striking instances, more particularly in the prophecies of Daniel and St. John, “this method of Divine prediction, presenting at first a general sketch and outline, and afterwards a more complete and finished picture of events.” It is the observation of Sir Isaac Newton, that “the prophecies of Daniel are all of them related to one another, as if they were but several parts of one general prophecy, given at several times;” and that “every following prophecy adds something new to the former².” “To this we may add,” says

¹ Preached Feb. 6, 1842.

² Observations, Part i. ch. 3. p. 24. Comp. Bp. Newton, “It is the usual method of the

Holy Spirit to make the later prophecies explanatory of the former; and Revelation is (Prov. iv. 18) ‘as the shining light

Dean Woodhouse, "that the *same* empires in Daniel are represented by various types and symbols. The four parts of the image, and the four beasts, are varied symbols of the *same* empires. . . . We are not, therefore, to be surprised, when"—as in the Apocalypse—"we find the history of the Church beginning anew, and appearing under other, yet corresponding types; and thus filling up, with additional and important information, the outlines which had been traced before ³."

The vision of the four beasts was revealed to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar, the "son," or grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, to whom had been vouchsafed the vision of the image. The application of the four symbols here described,—the lion, with eagle's wings, the bear, the leopard with four wings and four heads, and that other fourth beast to which no name is given, "diverse from all the beasts that were before it," with great iron teeth and ten horns,—to the four great empires, as they are commonly called, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman, is sanctioned by the same general consent of Jewish and Christian antiquity, and of the great body of modern expositors, which has recognized these same kingdoms in the four component parts of Nebuchadnezzar's image,—the gold, the silver, the brass, and the iron mixed with clay⁴. The exceptions which are to be found,

that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' The four great empires of the world, which were shown to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of a great image, were again more particularly represented to Daniel in the shape of four

great wild beasts."—Diss. xvi. vol. ii. p. 83.

³ Woodhouse's Annotations on the Apocalypse, pp. 106, 107.

⁴ "The identity of the subjects designed in the two visions is incontestable. For if the re-

in ancient or modern times to this general consent, are the same in regard to the two visions; it would, therefore, be going over again the ground which we traversed before, were I to bring forward the evidence supplied by early authority, in particular, that the symbols of the fourth monarchy—which may be considered as in fact the principal point in dispute—are to be applied to the Roman empire⁵.

It has, indeed, been questioned by some recent writers, whether the first three beasts in the vision before us are to be considered as identical with the gold, the silver, and the brass in Nebuchadnezzar's vision⁶. To the general objection that the application of the imagery here employed to the three first empires, respectively, is unsatisfactory⁷, it may be sufficient to plead in reply the general consent of interpreters recognizing the fitness of the several symbols. It is, however, objected more definitely, that the four monarchies here described are all spoken of as future—"four kings which *shall* arise out of the earth;" whereas, "if we suppose the first beast to be identical with the golden head of the image, and to have typified the personal history of Nebuchadnezzar, as well as the kingdom over which he presided, we are under the necessity of supposing that the vision was not, at least in this part of it, prophetic," since the vision was seen by Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar, the successor of Nebuchadnezzar⁸. But

spective symbols themselves in their Fourfold partition, and in other points of analogy and agreement, did not fix their own coincidence; the literal interpretation annexed to the visions, and completing the revelation, shuts out all doubt on that head."—Davison on

Prophecy, Lect. xii. p. 495.

⁵ Maitland's "Attempt to elucidate the Prophecies concerning Antichrist," p. 8.

⁶ Todd's Discourses, pp. 76—78.

⁷ Maitland, p. 9.

⁸ Todd, p. 76.

this objection is surely hypercritical. It is not unusual, as has been well observed, for the spirit of Prophecy to take a retrospective view of the conditions of the Church, in order to make the whole complete. The future tense,—though, indeed, in the original it is more properly the indefinite, denoting future or present time—might well have been used, even if the Babylonian empire had already passed away: it would be as though it had been said, “There shall be these four kingdoms in the earth,”—the first of the four thus spoken of being that which was then in being,—“and when the last of them is destroyed, then shall be the triumph of the kingdom of the Most High.” It is objected, however, still further, that if by the first three of the wild beasts here described we understand the empires of Babylon, Persia, and Greece, we must suppose these empires, as well as that of Rome, to be still in existence; since we read that, after “the fourth beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame,” “as concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time⁹”—a circumstance, it is remarked, which “has no parallel in the vision of the image, where the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, are expressly said to be broken in pieces together¹.” The objection might easily be, in a manner, retorted on those who would make the iron in the vision of the image to represent a kingdom still future, while they admit that one, at least, if not all three of the kingdoms denoted by the gold, the silver, and the brass, has long ago been broken in pieces. And it remains to be considered, whether

⁹ Dan. vii. 11, 12.

¹ Todd, p. 77.

the destruction of the fourth beast in the vision before us be not, in reality, distinct from that described in the former vision of the image, when the blow which came upon the feet of iron and clay involved the destruction of that whole fabric of earthly dominion which included within it all former empires. The scene of judgment, in the vision before us, would appear to be more narrowly defined to one quarter of the Roman world, the proper seat of Rome's original dominion; and we seem to have here what has been appropriately designated as "a prophetic geography," as well as "a prophetic chronology"; the nations of Chaldæa and Assyria, according to Sir Isaac Newton, being still the first beast; those of Media and Persia, the second; those of Macedon, Greece, and Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, the third; while "those of Europe, on this side Greece, are still the fourth"; the three former empires having, as the vision describes, had their "lives continued for a season and a time," though their "dominion" had been "taken away."

I shall not enter upon the consideration of the particular application of the first three symbols; inasmuch as, whatever difficulty may have been found in some particulars, it may be considered as generally admitted, that they represent, respectively, the empires of Babylon, Persia, and Macedon. I shall proceed therefore at once to the description of the fourth kingdom. "After this," says the prophet, "I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of

² Vid. Note, Appendix.

³ Observations, Part i. ch. 4. p. 31.

it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns⁴.” That the fourth beast here described in the prophet’s vision is the same with the iron, the fourth kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar’s image, is admitted on all hands, even by those who doubt whether the three preceding symbols are identical in the two cases⁵. For it is expressly said in the interpretation of the vision, “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth⁶ ;” and the power here delineated is manifestly the same which, in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, is described as being “strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things⁷.” In considering, on a former occasion, the import of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, I endeavoured to show that the interpretation, which had the all but unanimous consent of Antiquity in its favour, and which has been generally received in modern times, referring the symbols of the fourth kingdom to the Roman empire, is fully borne out by the character and history of that empire; and that the language of prophecy concerning it is strikingly illustrated by the statements and expressions of a witness so unbiassed as the infidel historian of Rome’s Decline and Fall. I shall not, therefore, now refer again to the testimonies and authorities from the early ages, which were then appealed to, but shall confine myself to those points which are more fully brought into view in the vision before us.

And the vision seems, in a remarkable manner, to take up the description where the former vision dropped it. The termination of the image in the

⁴ Dan. vii. 7.

⁶ Ver. 23.

⁵ Maitland’s “Attempt,” p. 8; Todd, p. 77.

⁷ Chap. ii. 40.

toes of iron and clay would fitly convey the idea of an empire which, in its last form, was to come into a state of manifold division; but what seemed *there* to be the latter end of weakness has *here* the semblance of rising strength⁸. Instead of the toes of the feet, in which the clay was mingled with the iron, we have here represented a formidable power, having on its head ten horns. And how it was understood in early times St. Jerome shall be our witness, appealing as he does to the universal consent of the ecclesiastical writers who had gone before him⁹. Having refuted Porphyry's interpretation, who, contrary to all historical truth, (as I have already had occasion to show,) endeavoured to make out of the kingdoms of Alexander's successors in Egypt and Syria, the fourth monarchy of the visions of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, Jerome proceeds; "Therefore let us say what all ecclesiastical writers have handed down; that in the consummation of the world, when the kingdom of the Romans is about to be destroyed, there will be ten kings, who shall divide the Roman world among them¹." In like manner, Irenæus, in the second century, had declared how "Daniel, looking to the end of the last kingdom, that is, the ten kings, among whom shall be divided the empire of those upon whom the son of perdition shall come, saith that ten horns did grow upon the beast²."

⁸ "Cornua dicit decem nasci bestiarum." Iren. inf. cit.

⁹ Cf. sup. p. 27.

¹ "Ergo dicamus quod omnes scriptores Ecclesiastici tradiderunt: in consummatione mundi, quando regnum destruentum est Romanorum, decem futuros reges, qui orbem Romanum inter se dividant."—

Hieron. *in loc.* t. iii. p. 1101.

² "Daniel autem, novissimi regni finem respiciens, (id est, novissimos decem reges in quos dividetur regnum illorum super quos filius perditionis veniet,) cornua dicit decem nasci bestiarum."—Iren. lib. v. c. 25, 3. p. 322.

“And more manifestly yet,”—so Irenæus continues shortly after,—“hath John, the disciple of the Lord, signified concerning the last time, and the ten kings which are in it, among whom shall be divided the kingdom which now reigns, explaining in the Apocalypse what were the ten horns which were seen by Daniel ³.” And this passage of Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, who was the disciple of St. John, is highly important and interesting, as showing how the earliest Christian expositors identified with the imagery before us that which re-appears in the visions of the Apocalypse, and which thus would seem, almost beyond the reach of controversy, to give apostolical authority to the interpretation which refers the symbol before us to the empire of Rome.

Let us turn, then, to the passages referred to in the Revelation of St. John. In the thirteenth chapter the apostolic prophet tells us how he “stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea,” (in like manner as in the vision before us,) “having seven heads *and ten horns*, and upon his horns ten crowns ⁴.” The wild beast there described combines, indeed, the characteristics of all the four beasts in Daniel’s vision ⁵; for “the beast” which St. John “saw was like unto a *leopard*, and his feet were as the feet of a *bear*, and his mouth as the mouth of a *lion* ⁶.” But the point to which I would direct more particular attention is, that the power

³ “Manifestius adhuc etiam de novissimo tempore, et de his qui sunt in eo decem regibus, in quos dividetur *quod nunc regnat imperium*, significavit Joannes Domini discipulus in Apocalypsi, edisserens quæ fuerint decem cornua, quæ a Daniele visa sunt, dicens sic

dictum esse sibi, ‘Et decem cornua quæ vidisti decem reges sunt,’ ” &c.—Iren. *ibid.* cap. 26, 1.

⁴ Rev. xiii. 1.

⁵ Compare Woodhouse, *in loc.* Annotations, pp. 259—261.

⁶ Ver. 2.

which St. John thus beheld in full strength and vigour, was one which had revived again from apparent destruction. “And I saw,” saith he, “one of his heads as it were wounded⁷ to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast⁸.” And again, in a later vision, he sees the same power, as it would appear,—though with some points added to the description—“a scarlet-coloured beast . . . having seven heads and ten horns,” on which was seated a woman “arrayed in purple and scarlet colour.” “And the angel said unto me . . . I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast . . . And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth⁹.” Without entering at present upon the more minute examination of the features of this picture, I would refer to it here only as describing the reviving again, from what had seemed complete extinction, of a power whose period of restored life was marked by the dominion of ten kings, and those kings, in their combined dominion,

⁷ More exactly “as if it had been slain unto death,” or, as Woodhouse renders it, “as having been smitten unto death.”

ὡς ἐσφαγμένην εἰς θάνατον.

⁸ Ver. 3.

⁹ Rev. xvii. 7, 8, 12, 18.

ruled and guided by that great city which in St. John's days reigned over the kings of the earth—and which, accordingly, can hardly be otherwise understood than of the imperial city of the Roman empire¹.

To apply, then, these visions to that which is immediately before us of the prophet Daniel. It is objected, that the power here described cannot be the Roman empire, which is long ago extinct, whereas *this*, it would appear from the vision, is to be in existence, and to have dominion in the earth, at the time of Christ's second coming to judgment. It is argued, that it can be “no very difficult matter to decide, whether such an empire as that of Rome still exists, or not,” and “yet” that “this is a point upon which interpreters of prophecy are far from being agreed;” contending in fact that, “although the power and jurisdiction of the Roman empire has been divided among many independent sovereignties, yet the empire itself does still continue².” Supposing, however, that there were indeed all the uncertainty here described, what were this, it might be asked, but the very fulfilment of the “mystery” shadowed out to St. John in the extinction and revival³ of the power which, in the revelation made

¹ So St. Jerome clearly understood it. He thus addresses Christian Rome: “Sed ad te loquar, quæ scriptam in fronte blasphemiam Christi confessione delesti. Urbs . potens, urbs orbis domina, urbs Apostoli voce laudata, interpretare vocabulum tuum. PΩMH aut fortitudinis nomen est apud Græcos, aut sublimitatis juxta Hebræos. Serva quod diceris,” &c.—Adv. Jovinian. lib. ii.

Op. t. iv. p. 228. But indeed, as Dean Woodhouse observes, “that this [‘great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth’] is Rome, must be, and indeed is, *universally allowed*.” — Annotations, p. 369.

² Todd's Discourses, pp. 69, 70.

³ Rev. xvii. 8, ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ μέλλει ἀναβαίνειν ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου. Still more re-

to him, seems beyond all controversy designated as *Roman*.” But, again, we are told “the ten horns of the four beasts have occasioned inextricable difficulties to those who have supposed the Roman empire to be intended. For the fourth beast,” it is argued, “was seen to rise from the sea with ten horns; and therefore, if we are to suppose the horns to denote kingdoms, it would seem to be incumbent on the advocates of this opinion to show that the Roman empire was divided into ten, from its origin, and during the whole period of its existence, until three of the ten kingdoms were plucked up before the little horn.” And “the only mode of evading this difficulty,” we are told, “is to assume that the rise of the beast did not denote the rise of the empire symbolized by the beast, but a certain period in the duration of that empire, at which it shall be divided into ten ‘.”

I wish to consider fully the difficulties and objections which occur in a thoughtful study of Prophecy, because such objections continually bring to light minute points of correspondence between the symbols to prophetic imagery and their historical accomplishment, which might otherwise escape observation, or even give an impression the very opposite to the truth. In the instance before us, there is a slight variation, in the order of description, between the visions of Daniel and St. John, which, though minute, is worthy of notice. In the Revelation, the

markably in ver. 8, if the received reading be retained, τὸ θηρίον ὃ, τι ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καίπερ ἐστίν—“the beast that was, and is not, and yet is,” E. V. Dean Woodhouse retains

this reading, “as appearing to contain an appropriate meaning, which” he in vain looks for “in the reading preferred by Griesbach [καὶ πάρεσται].”

‘ Todd, pp. 73, 74.

wild beast which St. John saw rising out of the sea, rose, with his seven heads and ten horns manifested as already in their full power; his whole body being then more particularly described⁵. But in Daniel's vision it is otherwise: the prophet describes the beast which he saw, "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," having great iron teeth; and how "it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and,"—it is added, as the last point in the description—"it had ten horns⁶." The ten horns, it would appear, came last into the prophet's view, thus connecting this vision with that of Nebuchadnezzar's image ending in the toes of the feet; save only that here, as has been already observed, there was discovered rising power, instead of declining weakness:—in the words of the interpretation just now quoted from Irenæus, there were the signs of dominion "springing up" in the latter days of Rome's existence. It would, therefore, appear in reality *more* exactly in accordance with the prophetic imagery, if we could show that the Roman empire was *not* thus divided from its origin; provided only that a clearly marked period in its history can be pointed to, at which it entered, as it were, upon another term of existence, in a new form and character.

And such a period, clearly marked and defined, we discover in the fall of the Roman empire in the West in the fifth century, and its division among

⁵ Rev. xiii. 1, 2. "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion." . . .

⁶ Dan. vii. 7.

the barbarian tribes. "Two great revolutions," says a popular historian, "have happened in the political state, and in the manners of the European nations. The first was occasioned by the progress of the Roman power; the second, by the subversion of the Roman empire⁷." "Then, indeed, occurred a period," says another writer, assigning his reasons for commencing the philosophical view of modern history from the dissolution of the Western Empire, "at which the chain of events is so broken, as to have little or no real or visible connexion with that of those which followed; then, out of the ruins of one mighty empire arose, almost together, the principal of those states into which Europe is at present divided; and then, in the gradual combination of northern barbarism with Roman refinement, were formed the first elements of those manners and of those principles of policy, by which Europe is at this day characterized⁸."

Thus did a new form and development of earthly power come into view, constituting another period, or phase of dominion, and yet reanimating again, as it were, the same body. "Ten horns," or kingdoms, appeared. "The definite number," says the accurate Davison, "may, or may not, be a strict postulate of the prophecy;"—for, I would add, it is well known that the number ten is not unfrequently used in Scripture to represent a large indefinite number⁹; (though, in this instance, from the mention of *three* kingdoms of the ten as being afterwards plucked up by the roots, the number would seem to be definite;)

⁷ Robertson's "View of the State of Europe," introductory to his History of Charles V. vol. i. p. 1.

⁸ Miller's Philosophy of Modern History, vol. i. pp.

184, 185.

⁹ e. g. Lev. xxvi. 26. Eccles. vii. 19. Amos vi. 9. Zech. viii. 23. "ten times," Gen. xxxi. 7. 41. Num. xiv. 22. Dan. i. 20, &c.

at all events, "a *multifarious* division," as Mr. Davison observes, "unquestionably is denoted. That multifarious division," he continues, "took place in the cluster of petty contemporary kingdoms, which replaced the Roman empire upon its dissolution. In that cluster of kingdoms," he says, "the ten horns of the fourth beast, diverse from all the rest, find their interpretation, and their correspondent realities'."

Here, however, an objection is found in "the great diversity in the lists of kingdoms that have been proposed by different writers;" "each," it is said, "refuting satisfactorily the theory of his predecessors, and each proposing a new arrangement, which is refuted with equal triumph by those who follow him'." It is easy, indeed, for a minute criticism to find difficulty in determining, amid the chaos of barbarous tribes, the precise number of kingdoms which may be said to have been formed. "The few variations," as Bishop Newton observes, "in these accounts must be ascribed to the great disorder and confusion of the times, one kingdom falling and another rising, and scarce any subsisting for a long while together. As a learned writer," quoted by the Bishop, "remarks, 'All these kingdoms were variously divided, either by conquest or inheritance. However, as if that number of *ten* had been fatal in the Roman dominions, it hath been taken notice of upon particular occasions. As about A.D. 1240, by Eberard, Bishop of Saltzburg, in the diet at Ratisbon;' " and "'at the time of the Reformation they were also ten'." And so again, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was observed¹ that, ex-

¹ Davison on Prophecy, p. 503. p. 556.

² Todd, p. 75.

³ Daubuz (on Rev. xiii. 1),

⁴ Whiston, Essay on the Revelation, Part 3, p. 235, also quoted by Bp. Newton.

cluding those kingdoms which were without the bounds of the old Roman empire, Europe was "very nearly returned again to the same condition" as when it was first divided, consisting of "ten principal kingdoms or states". It may be well to bear in mind that the nations of Canaan, whose land Israel was to possess, are somewhat variously enumerated in different places⁵. And the same difficulty as in the case before us, has of late been found in regard to the fourfold division of Alexander's empire, commonly received by historians; we are told that "it would have been as easy to have produced twelve or more subdivisions," "among the numerous petty sovereignties that sprang up from time to time amid the wars and dissensions of his successors". Mathematical accuracy hardly belongs to history: there is much obscurity enveloping the origin of the different tribes which form themselves into nations; and their kingdoms are often strangely blended one into another. Deeper historical research may yet bring many things

⁵ Bp. Newton, Dissert. xiv. vol. i. p. 462. Comp. Woodhouse, Annot. pp. 366, 367. "History exhibits to us a time, when the Roman empire in the West, symbolized by the beast of this chapter [Rev. xvii.], gradually declined, and by the irruption and repeated attacks of barbarian hordes, was broken and fell to pieces. From the ruins of this mass ten kingdoms arose; they are thus enumerated by different writers, not only at their first establishment, but also in their progress in successive periods. Though much varied in respect to the people of which they were composed, their number has been nearly the same; so that

if an average were to be taken in the long course of fourteen hundred years, reaching to our times, the number *ten* would be found to predominate. And when we consider the natural instability of supreme power, the wars, conquests, and the accumulation of empire, to which nations are exposed, and which have been prevalent to such excess in other quarters of the globe, during the same period, we must think it a matter of wonder that the ten European kingdoms should subsist as they have done, in fulfilment of the prediction."

⁶ See Note, Appendix.

⁷ Todd, pp. 128, 172.

to light, which are at present involved in uncertainty. And, moreover, there may be reasons of Divine Wisdom, beyond our narrow view, why it should not yet be clearly seen which ten precisely were the kingdoms which the prophet saw; it may be still reserved for "the time of the end" to discover it, and God's all-perfect knowledge be at length made manifest, and His counsels be more perfectly fulfilled in man's ignorance.

It would be a waste of time, I think, to refute the interpretation of Porphyry, adopted by Grotius and Collins, which, making the fourth kingdom to be those of Alexander's successors in Egypt and Syria, would endeavour to find the ten horns among the kings of those two lines, selecting from each the names of those who are supposed to have been most hostile to the Jews. The attempt has been sufficiently exposed by Jerome and Theodoret amongst the ancients⁸, and by Bishop Chandler⁹ and others in modern times. It has, at first sight, this degree of plausibility, that it makes the little horn which appears among the ten, to be the same with that which rises out of the four horns of the goat, the emblem of the Macedonian empire, in the following vision of Daniel; and whose course of pride and persecution so closely resembles that which is described in the vision before us. But the ten horns are manifestly contemporary kings or kingdoms; not individual princes, to be selected arbitrarily out of the succession of two lines like those of the Seleucidæ and Lagidæ. The attempt, moreover, to identify the ten among those kings has completely failed; and the three who are specified as having fallen before

⁸ In loc. Vid. Note, App. Christianity, vol. i. pp. 219—

⁹ Vindication of Defence of 227.

Antiochus Epiphanes,—the little horn in the vision of the ram and the he-goat, and therefore it is supposed, here also,—were not three of those ten, as the conditions of the prophecy require¹. But, indeed, it is evident that, whatever resemblance may be traced between the two little horns described in the two visions, they are distinct powers, though their course be parallel, the one arising in the East, the other in the West; the one out of the broken monarchy of Greece, the other out of the ruins of the empire of Rome². And, accordingly, in early times, though the one prophecy was referred,—typically, at least,—to Antiochus, the fulfilment of the other was looked for in the breaking up of the Roman empire³.

The same argument, however, of the identity of the little horn in the one vision and in the other, has recently been urged in support of a very different hypothesis—that which would make all the four kingdoms described in the vision before us to be still future, and contemporary; the kingdoms of Persia and Grecia, described in the vision of the ram and he-goat, being likewise supposed to be future⁴. On this hypothesis it is argued, that the fourth horn of the goat, out of which the little horn came forth, must be identical with the fourth kingdom⁵; and the suggestion is offered still further, (though, indeed, only as a suggestion,) “that the kingdoms represented by the four horns of the he-goat may perhaps be the same which were exhibited to the prophet in the former vision, under

¹ Chandler's Vindication, l. &c.
c. p. 226.

² Comp. Bp. Chandler, pp. 128, 129.
227, 228.

³ Vid. Jerome, Theodoret,

⁴ Todd's Discourses, pp.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 109—113.

the emblems of four great beasts⁶. On this hypothesis, the symbol immediately before us, the beast with ten horns, would be but one of the four horns of the he-goat, the symbol of the Grecian monarchy⁷; which monarchy, on the commonly received interpretation, is the *third* beast in the vision before us, the leopard with four heads and four wings⁸. But this is an hypothesis which so utterly removes all the recognized landmarks of prophetic interpretation, that it requires strong evidence indeed in its favour to entitle it to consideration.

That the ten horns were to be ten kingdoms which were to rise out of the ruins of the Roman empire, was, as we have already seen, the consentient belief of early times. But we may observe still further—and it is an important point in the evidence—St. Jerome, who, as we saw on a former occasion, himself living in the beginning of the fifth century, witnessed the growing weakness of that empire, the mixing of the iron with the clay⁹, in describing, in one of his epistles, the calamities of the times, has enumerated an assemblage of barbarous nations who were then ravaging Gaul, as if he thought he saw them now rising into dominion, and ready to make way for the dreaded power of the little horn. “Innumerable and most savage nations,” he says, “have

⁶ Ibid. p. 126.

⁷ That the he-goat is the symbol of the Grecian monarchy, it will be recollected, rests on inspired authority—“the rough goat is the king of Grecia.” (Dan. viii. 21.)

⁸ This description of the third kingdom, and of the “dominion” which was “given to it” (ver. 3), seems clearly to identify itself with that which

we find in chap. xi., of the “mighty king” which should “rule with great dominion,” and whose kingdom was afterwards to “be divided toward the four winds of heaven” (vv. 3, 4)—a description which cannot be interpreted otherwise than of the king of “the realm of Grecia.”

⁹ Vid. sup. p. 29.

taken possession of the whole of Gaul. The Quadian, the Vandal, the Sarmatian, the Alani, the Gepidæ, the Heruli, the Saxons, the Burgundians, the Alemanni, and, oh! terrible republic! the Pannonians"—it will be observed, he has enumerated ten—"have ravaged the whole country between the Alps and the Pyrenees, the Ocean and the Rhine¹." In the overthrow which he thus beheld, he recognized the removal, as now to all appearance begun, of that Roman power which had hitherto stood in the way²; and he looked, accordingly, for "that wicked one" soon to be revealed in his season. "He which letteth," he had said just before, "is being taken out of the way, and yet we fail to understand that Antichrist is approaching³."

But we must proceed to trace in the prophet's vision the growth of this newly-rising power. "I

¹ "Innumerabiles et ferocissimæ nationes universas Gallias occuparunt. Quidquid inter Alpes et Pyrenæum est, quod Oceano et Rheno includitur, Quadus, Wandalus, Sarmata, Halani, Gipedes, Heruli, Saxones, Burgundiones, Alemanni, et, ô lugenda respublica! hostes Pannonii vastarunt. 'Etenim Assur venit cum illis,'" &c. — Epist. ad Ageruchiam, tom. iv. p. 748. I do not quote this passage as proving that St. Jerome identified these nations with the ten horns of the beast, for three of these horns he undoubtedly supposed to be those mentioned in Dan. xi. 43 (Egypt, the Libyans, and the Ethiopians); I quote it as showing that he watched the fate of the Roman empire in the West, and especially of the city of Rome itself, as the

scene on which the Antichristian power was in due time to be revealed. The date assigned to this epistle is A.D. 409. Cf. Ep. 35 ad Heliodorum (Epitaphium Nepotiani). "Scythiam, Thraciam, Macedoniam, Dardaniam, Daciam, Thessaloniam, Achaïam, Epiros, Dalmatiam, cunctasque Pannonias Gothus, Sarmata, Quadus, Alanus, Hunni, Wandali, Marcomanni vastant, trahunt, rapiunt . . . Romanus orbis ruit, et tamen cervix nostra erecta non flectitur."—Op. tom. iv. p. 274. This epistle was written in the year 396.

² Vid. sup. p. 18, and Note.

³ "Qui tenebat de medio fit, et non intelligimus Antichristum appropinquare, quem Dominus Jesus Christus interficiet spiritu oris ejus."—Ep. ad Ageruchiam, sup. cit.

considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things⁴.” In entering upon a general view of the history of the kingdoms of modern Europe, dating from the beginning of that new order of things which arose out of the dissolution of the Roman empire, an historical writer, already referred to, begins with Italy; for “as this country,” he says, “had been the seat of government of the ancient empire of the West, it retained a predominant influence on the establishments by which that empire was succeeded; and even became the seat of a new monarchy over the consciences of men, which, though professing to be of a spiritual character, affected all their political interests⁵.” We seem here to trace the rise of a power which would answer to the description given in the prophet’s vision of that “other⁶” kingdom, which was to arise after, or behind, those ten, and to be “diverse from the first⁷ ;”—a kingdom of a more exalted nature than theirs, looking apparently to higher interests, with “eyes like the eyes of man,” and, in the lofty character of its pretensions and claims, “a mouth speaking great things.” And if this be taken to describe that spiritual monarchy⁸

⁴ Ver. 8.

⁵ Miller’s *Philosophy of Modern History*, Lecture vi. vol. i. p. 279. “Italy was therefore the connecting bond of ancient and modern history.” —Ibid.

⁶ Ver. 20.

⁷ Ver. 24.

⁸ It is well worthy of re-

mark, that the testimony which would be to be cited next in order from Christian antiquity, to pursue the inquiry chronologically, would be that which records the judgment of Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, that “whosoever either calleth himself the universal bishop, or desireth so to be

which gradually rose to supreme power in the centre of the political system, and in the very seat of former dominion, we find, as matter of fact, from the records of history, unbiassed by any reference to Sacred Prophecy, that there were three kingdoms “plucked up” from before it; and these three, such as seem undoubtedly entitled to claim a place among those “first” which arose on the ruins of the ancient empire. And it is certainly remarkable, that three distinct dynasties of barbarian tribes and chieftains, from different parts of the empire, should thus have successively fixed themselves in its centre, and established severally their dominion there⁹. A late distinguished writer of the Roman Communion, in his able sketch¹ of the “Geographical and Political Revolutions of the Empire of Germany”—“the holy Roman Empire,” according to the style and title which it bore to the very period of its fall—in tracing briefly the course of the history from the general division of the ancient empire between the sons of Theodosius, down to the revival of the empire of the West in the person of Charlemagne, mentions first “*Odoacer, king of the Herulians;*” who “conquered all Italy, put an end to the Western empire, and was proclaimed king of Italy;” then Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, who “mur-

called, in his pride he is the forerunner of Antichrist;” and his earnestly repeated forebodings, when he says of such an one, “In this pride of his, what other thing is there tokened, but that the time of Antichrist is even at hand?” “The king of pride is even in the gates;” &c. (Op. t. ii. pp. 881, 751, 744, &c. quoted by Bp. Jewel. Works, ed. Jelf,

vol. ii. pp. 131, 142. Comp. vol. vii. p. 174.) Vide Note, Appendix.

⁹ Vid. Note, Appendix.

¹ I have the rather referred to writers whose plan is to mark the chief outlines of historical events, as less likely to give an undue importance to minor circumstances. But see Note, Appendix.

dered and succeeded Odoacer," and "became the founder of the *Ostrogothic dynasty of Italian kings*;" and lastly, "*the Lombard kingdom of Italy*," established by the victories of Alboin and his successors". After noticing the intermediate conquests of Justinian, and the establishment of the Exarch of Ravenna, as the representative of the Eastern empire in Italy, "Such," he says, "were the revolutions of the empire of the West." "The kingdom of the Franks now came into notice." He then traces to its origin *the Francic Association*. "In the mean time," he goes on to say, "*the popes had risen into consequence*. St. Peter, the first of the popes"—it will be recollected that the writer is a Romanist, for which reason I the rather cite his testimony—"had neither temporal estate nor temporal power . . . The donation of Constantine," the writer continues, "is a fable;" but "from him and his successors," he goes on to say, "the popes obtained extensive possessions in Italy, Sicily, Dalmatia, France, and Africa." "The laws of Constantine and his successors conferred on them something like a right of civil jurisdiction. This was increased by the circumstances and temper of the times; and thus they acquired the power of magistracy. After Justinian had reconquered Italy, Rome was governed by a duke, who, like the other dukes of Italy, was wholly subordinate to the exarch of Ravenna. Still, as the popes constantly resided at Rome, their spiritual character, their talents, the use they made of them, and particularly, the sums of money spent by them in public and private charities, in support of the walls and fortresses of the city of Rome, and in

² Works of Charles Butler, italics are Mr. Butler's own, Esq., vol. ii. pp. 2, 3. The marking the chief events.

maintaining troops for its defence, endeared them to the Roman people. This gave them considerable political influence in the city of Rome, and the adjoining parts of Italy. Their exertion of it was always useful, and sometimes necessary for answering the purposes of government; and thus the popes became possessed, indirectly, of temporal power.

“Such was the situation of the popes,” the same writer continues, “when Leo the Isaurian [A.D. 720] began his attack on religious devotion to images . . . Equally averse from the emperor and the Lombard king, the people formed themselves into a separate government, under the magistrates, and placed the pope at their head³.” And, enriched as he was soon afterwards with the gifts of Pepin⁴,—bestowed in return for the sanction which the spiritual power had given to his usurpation of the crown of his masters, the kings of France⁵,—the Bishop of Rome was now become “a subordinate prince, with a considerable degree of temporal and territorial power, and political influence⁶.” The popes soon “asserted a right,” I proceed with my quotation, “both of spiritual and temporal power, over the emperor; and pretended that he held the empire as a fief or benefice from them. . . On the one hand it became a fundamental maxim of jurisprudence, that the emperor acquired, in the instant of his election at the German diet, the kingdoms of Italy and Rome; on the other, this kingdom was merely nominal; and it became another maxim of jurisprudence, that the emperor could not legally assume the titles of Emperor or Augustus,

³ Butler, pp. 4—12.

⁴ “From these gifts of Pepin,” Mr. Butler observes, “the temporal sovereignty of

the popes in Italy should be dated.”—p. 21.

⁵ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁶ Butler, p. 69.

till he had received the crown from the hands of the pope; and he was often obliged to purchase it by great sacrifices⁷.” “The popes soon advanced a still higher claim. In virtue of an authority which they pretended to derive from Heaven, some of them asserted that the pope was the supreme temporal lord of the universe, and that all princes and civil governors were, even in temporal concerns, subject to them⁸. In conformity to this doctrine, the popes took upon them to try, condemn, and depose sovereign princes; to absolve their subjects from allegiance to them, and to grant their kingdoms to others.

“That a claim so unfounded and impious”—I am quoting still from the eminent Romanist writer before referred to—a claim “so detrimental to religion, so hostile to the peace of the world, and apparently so extravagant and visionary, should have been made, is strange:—stranger still,” he goes on to say, “is the success it met with. There scarcely is a kingdom in Christian Europe, the sovereign of which did not, on some occasion or other, acquiesce in it, so far, at least, as to invoke it against his own antagonist; and having once used it against an antagonist, it was not always easy for him to deny the justice of it, when it was urged against himself. The contests respecting it were chiefly carried on with the German emperors. All Italy and Germany were divided between the adherents of the popes

⁷ Butler, p. 71.

⁸ It may be observed that, on this view of earthly sovereignties, a delineation of the kingdoms which arose in Europe on the ruins of the Roman

empire, would hardly, even in a temporal and political point of view, be complete without a place, and that a prominent and pre-eminent place, assigned to the papal monarchy.

and the adherents of the emperors⁹.” “The beginning of the fourteenth century may be assigned for the æra of its highest elevation; as, about that time, their territorial possessions had their largest extent; they had then made their greatest progress in exempting the clergy from the civil power; and they then experienced least resistance to their general claim of divine right to temporal power. They might at this time be thought to have secured the duration of their temporal empire; from this period, however, it began to decline, and the causes of its decline are obvious.”

The historian goes on to show how, “on some occasions,” the popes “carried their pretensions to a length which excited the disgust, and even provoked the resistance of the most timid;” how “they were engaged in some enterprises evidently unjust, and the lives of some of them were confessedly dissolute;” and how the temporary removal of the pope from Rome—“the captivity of Babylon,” as it was termed—and then the great papal schism; the discussions which took place at the Councils of Constance, Basil, and Pisa, and among theologians of learning and temper, respecting the papal pretensions to temporal power; and the ruder attack made on them by the Albigenses, Wickliffites, Waldenses, and Lollards, and other similar associated bodies of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—all tended to the calling in question of the pretensions which had been carried so high¹.

The same writer proceeds to trace further the outline of events in the history of the great empire of Europe, down to the period when the revolution, which,

⁹ Butler, p. 72.

¹ Ibid. pp. 82—86.

at the close of the last century, convulsed all Europe, and shook to their foundations its long-established thrones, brought on “the last days of the empire of the West²,” when it had now “subsisted during a thousand years³,” from the time of its revival by Charlemagne under the immediate sanction of the see of Rome. And thus a dominion, whose rise had been in rebellion sanctioned by religion, fell before a power which sprung out of the very nation from which that empire had itself originated; and which, seeking now again to consecrate its revolutionary empire with the same sacred authority, strangely recalled to men’s minds the events of a thousand years before⁴.

But in whatever degree we may trace, in these or other occurrences of recent times, the immediate agency of the Supreme Ruler of the world, and His Almighty Providence; or whether we look rather to scenes yet future for the full accomplishment of the prophet’s vision; that vision clearly unfolds the mystery of the judgment which, in its appointed time, is prepared on high for all pride of man, whatever form it assume, or in whatever garb it be arrayed. “I beheld,” saith the prophet, “till the thrones were cast down,” or rather, it should be rendered, “till thrones were set⁵, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand

² Butler, p. 206.

³ Ibid. p. 208.

⁴ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁵ Vid. Note, Appendix.

stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened⁶.” It is, doubtless, impossible not to trace here a shadowing out of the awful realities of the last great day of judgment; and great stress is laid on this by those who contend against the application of the symbols of the fourth kingdom to the Roman empire, which they maintain—and in one sense justly—“has long ceased to exist⁷.” Yet even they would, on their own hypothesis, be disposed to regard the period of judgment here described as identical, not with that which St. John gives in the Revelation of the final judgment, when he beheld the “great white throne and him that sat thereon,” and “saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire⁸;” but rather with that earlier scene which he describes as revealed to him, when he “saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them;” “and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years⁹.”

But indeed there is, in some respects, a still closer resemblance to the description before us in that which St. Jerome has quoted, in illustration of it, from a scene which is disclosed earlier still in the Book of the Revelation¹. At the very opening of

⁶ Vv. 9, 10.

⁷ Todd, pp. 71—73.

⁸ Rev. xx. 11—14.

⁹ Rev. xx. 4. The references given in the margin are to this vision of Daniel (vii. 9, 22, 27). Matt. xix. 28, and Luke xiii. 30.

¹ Hieron. in loc. t. iii. p.

1101. “ ‘Aspiciebam donec throni positi sunt,’ &c. . . . Simile quid et in Johannis Apocalypsi legitur: ‘Post hæc statim fui in spiritu, et ecce thronus positus,’ &c. . . . Multi igitur throni quos vidit Daniel, hi mihi videntur esse, quos Johannes viginti quattuor thro-

the Apocalyptic visions, St. John tells us that, being in the spirit, he saw “a throne set in heaven, and one sat on the throne . . . and round about the throne were four and twenty seats²:” and he “heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands³.” And from the presence of this throne, set in heaven, yet watching and ruling the powers of earth, judgments go forth. For so, in another stage of the vision, we read, “there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned⁴.”

These passages, and others like them, show how, in the visions of Prophecy, the throne of judgment of the Everlasting King is, in some sense, ever at hand ready to be revealed, and its unseen processes of judgment ever going on⁵; though at certain times,—and more awfully, we may believe, as “the mystery

nos nuncupat. . . . Hos thronos esse reor, de quibus Paulus Apostolus loquitur: ‘Sive throni sive dominationes’ [Col. i. 16]. Et in Evangelio legimus: ‘Vos autem sedebitis super duodecim thronos, judicantes duodecim tribus Israel.’ ”

² Rev. iv. 2, 4.

³ Rev. v. 11. (Comp. Dan. vii. 10.)

⁴ Rev. xi. 15—17.

⁵ “Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting. The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice.”—Ps. xciii. 2, 3. “O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the world: render a reward to the proud.”—Ps. xciv. 1, 2.

of iniquity" in its varied forms unfolds itself, and the ends of the world draw near,—the Spirit of Prophecy or the hand of Providence draws back the veil, and exhibits the awful scene which Daniel saw in vision⁶. It was a process of judgment which was going on, it might be, and, as the event seems to have shewn, *was* in reality going on, through ages: for God's judgments are not like man's; they move with tardy foot, to man's eye, but, for all this, with the more fearful certainty, travelling on unerringly and steadily to their full accomplishment. "I beheld," says the prophet, as though the vision were long, "because of the voice of the words which the little horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame⁷." It is, indeed, unto "the day of Christ,"—for so the time of judgment is emphatically termed,—that the final destruction of that Wicked One is reserved, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming⁸."

The coming of Christ in his kingdom and glory, is, in truth, that great and final consummation for which the whole course of God's moral government hath been ordered, from the very beginning of the world's history; and every successive stage in the fall of earthly power is, in its degree, a fuller manifestation of the glory with which the Almighty would invest His Incarnate Son, exalted in His human nature, as the Son of Man, to supreme dominion. And, accordingly, when in vision the pro-

⁶ "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth

up his enemies round about." —Ps. xcvi. 2, 3.

⁷ Ver. 11.

⁸ 2 Thess. ii. 2, 8.

phet had beheld the destruction of the fourth beast, there was revealed to him a coming in glory of Him who was to be the "Heir of all things." "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed⁹." The consummation of the vision is the same with that which had been revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, though it is here more fully unfolded. The kingdom which "the God of heaven" would "set up" in the days of the fourth and last of those earthly empires, is here manifested still further as the kingdom which was to be given to the Son of Man; and which was finally to vindicate its heavenly character, and to claim its supreme dominion over every power which, under whatever form or disguise, had dared to exalt itself above Him from whom is derived all power in heaven and in earth; whose "dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Such is the conclusion of the vision, as described by the prophet. In the interpretation of it, given him by the angel—for the prophet "came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this that he saw¹"—there are some points brought out more fully still than in the vision itself. The consummation of the dominion of the four empires which were to "arise out of the earth," is

⁹ Vv. 13, 14.

¹ Ver. 16.

described as the kingdom of “the saints:”—“The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever; even for ever and ever².” Enquiring further concerning the fourth power, the prophet at the same time describes it more minutely; making mention of that “horn which had eyes, and a mouth which spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows³.” And he “beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom⁴.” In answer to the prophet’s enquiry, it was declared to him more explicitly concerning the power whose growing tyranny he had seen thus displayed, “he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time⁵.”

Into the consideration of the period thus enigmatically defined, as well as of the distinctive character of the later stages in the progress of the power here described, I shall not enter at present; reserving these points for discussion when we come to the investigation of other prophecies in which they are more fully set forth. I would only observe here that, whatever obscurity may hang over the yet undeveloped future; whether the appointed season of affliction to the “saints of the Most High,”—the Church of Christ on earth—be longer or shorter; whether the dreariest period be already past, or more searching trial be yet in store; whether the

² Ver. 18.³ Ver. 20.⁴ Vv. 21, 22.⁵ Ver. 25.

appointed "time and times and dividing of time" denote days or years,—of this at all events the sure word of Prophecy leaves no room to doubt, that the days of trial to the Church are numbered by her gracious Lord, and that vengeance shall, in due time, be taken of all His and her enemies. Whether their power and tyranny be purely secular and earthly, as of the kingdoms of this world; or rise up in the form of something more human, and less akin to the violence and cruelty of the beasts of the earth; with craft and subtlety more refined, and pride more lofty, because spiritual,—though debasing itself to wordly ends;—thus much we know assuredly, that whatever it be that riseth up against Him who is enthroned on high, shall sooner or later fall before Him. For concerning all the power of that wicked one it is written, "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven"—thus does the sacred language set forth the ever-growing glory and the ever-spreading triumphs of Christ's Church—"shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High"—to the least as well as the greatest of His saints; to the last as well as the first; to the humblest among the servants of God and of His Christ, not less than to them to whom were promised, in the regeneration, twelve thrones whereon they should sit in the kingdom of the Son of Man, the Eternal Ever-Blessed Son of the Most High,—“whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

LECTURE IV.¹

DAN. viii. 25 (part) and 26.

“ He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes ; but he shall be broken without hand. And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true : wherefore shut thou up the vision ; for it shall be for many days.”

IN two preceding Lectures we considered separately the first and second visions recorded in the book of Daniel ; namely, that of the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign, and that of the four beasts revealed to the prophet himself in the first year of Belshazzar. In regard to both of these visions, I endeavoured to establish, against recent objections, the interpretation which, as we saw, had the almost unanimous consent of Antiquity, both Jewish and Christian, in its favour ; and which has been adopted by the far greater number and the most approved of modern expositors—the interpretation which identifies the fourth kingdom, in either vision, with the empire of Rome. It appeared that, in the former vision, the power designated by the feet of iron and clay, was the Roman empire in its Pagan state, destined to fall before the kingdom and

¹ Preached Nov. 27, 1842.

Church of Christ, denoted by the stone “cut out without hands.” And in the latter vision, the fourth beast seemed to represent the same empire, re-appearing again in another form which carried on the history of the former,—a cluster of kingdoms delineated under the imagery of ten horns, the emblems of sovereignty and power, together with that other little horn, which came up among them, “diverse from the rest.” And this, viewed by the light of other prophetic Scripture, seemed to foretel a new and strange dominion of pride and tyranny which was to have its origin and seat in the very city which was the capital, as well as in the countries which had been immediately subject to the sway, of ancient imperial Rome.

We now come to the third vision recorded in the book of Daniel, *viz.* that of the ram and the he-goat; a vision which, the prophet tells us, appeared to him “in the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar,”—two years, in fact, “after that which appeared unto” him “at the first².” Of this vision part is fully and explicitly interpreted by the angel Gabriel; who appeared to the prophet, and was bidden by the “man’s voice” which he “heard between the banks of Ulai,” to “make” him “to understand the vision³.” The ram which he saw standing before the river, and which “had two horns; and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last,” represented “the kings of Media and Persia⁴.” And the exact propriety and historic truth of the symbol, as applied to the Medo-Persian empire, has been well pointed out by many expositors; its victories and the growth

² Dan. viii. 1.³ Ver. 16.⁴ Vv. 3, 20.

of its power being accurately described by “the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great⁵.”

“And as I was considering,” saith the prophet, “behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes⁶.” And this, in like manner, is interpreted by the angel; —“the rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king⁷.”

And here again expositors have remarked the peculiar fitness of the symbol employed to represent the Macedonian empire, and the characteristic swiftness of Alexander’s conquests⁸. But the vision goes on to describe the conflict of the Macedonian and the Persian empires. “And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand⁹.”

How graphically this description corresponds with Alexander’s march and victories, Bishop Newton and others have shewn by a minute reference to the history¹. “Therefore,” saith the prophet, “the

⁵ Ver. 4. See Bp. Newton and others.

⁶ Ver. 5.

⁷ Ver. 21.

⁸ *E.g.* St. Chrysostom, *sup. cit.* p. 45, Note ⁶.

⁹ Vv. 6, 7.

¹ “One can hardly read these words without having some image of Darius’s army standing and guarding the river Granicus, and of Alexander on

he goat waxed very great : and when he was strong, the great horn was broken ; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven²." Here again we have the inspired interpretation by the mouth of the angel, in the words following : " Now that [*viz.* the great horn] being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power³." By the death of Alexander in the midst of his career, and the murder, within a few years, of all the representatives of his line, " the first ' horn ' or kingdom was entirely ' broken.' The royal family being thus extinct," says Bp. Newton, " the governors of provinces, who had usurped the power, assumed the title of kings : and by the defeat and death of Antigonus in the battle of Ipsus, they were reduced to four, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus, who parted Alexander's dominions between them, and divided and settled them into four kingdoms. These four kingdoms," he adds, " are the ' four notable horns,' which came up in the room of the first great horn ; and are the same as the four heads of the leopard in the former vision⁴. ' Four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power ;' they were to be kingdoms of Greeks, not of Alexander's own family, but only of his nation ; and neither were they to be equal to him in power and dominion. . . . They were likewise," Bp. Newton continues, " to extend ' toward the four winds of heaven : ' and in the partition of

the other side with his forces plunging in, swimming across the stream, and rushing on the enemy with all the fire and fury that can be imagined."—Bp. Newton, referring to Arrian,

lib. i. cap. 14, and Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. cap. 9.

² Ver. 8.

³ Ver. 22.

⁴ [Dan. vii. 6.]

the empire Cassander held Macedon, and Greece, and the *western* parts; Lysimachus had Thrace, Bithynia, and the *northern* regions; Ptolemy possessed Egypt and the *southern* countries; and Seleucus obtained Syria and the *eastern* provinces. Thus were they divided 'toward the four winds of heaven⁵.' "

To this interpretation, however generally it has been received, objections have recently been made, grounded on the alleged difficulty of finding historic proof of this fourfold division of the Macedonian empire. We are told that "the truth is, that Alexander's empire was divided into many more than four petty sovereignties, which continued in a state of constant change for several years⁶;" and "therefore that the statement usually made of the fourfold division of Alexander's dominions must be understood with some latitude, as asserting not that four kingdoms, and four only, stood up out of the nation, but that the four kingdoms now generally enumerated by modern expositors were, if not the only, at least the most eminent subdivisions of the original empire⁷." And, indeed, Sir Isaac Newton is quoted as asserting only that, when the last of Alexander's line was murdered, and the chief generals of his empire now "took upon themselves the title and dignity of kings, having abstained from this honour while there remained any of Alexander's race to inherit the crown;" "the monarchy of the Greeks, for want of an heir, was broken into several kingdoms; four of which, seated 'to the four winds of heaven,' were *very eminent*⁸." The expression, it may be observed,

⁵ Bp. Newton, Diss. xv.

⁶ Todd's Discourses, p. 128.

⁷ Ibid. pp. 174, 175.

⁸ Observ. on Daniel (Part i. chap. 12, p. 172) quoted by Todd, p. 175, note ⁹.

corresponds well with the prophetic description which tells us, that in place of the great horn "there came up four notable" (or "conspicuous") "ones," or, as the force of the original might perhaps even more exactly be given, "there came up conspicuously four" towards the four winds of heaven."

It appears, indeed, from Sir Isaac Newton's accurate sketch of the history, that there were, in the first instance, five who thus assumed a share in the divided kingdom; but, one of the five, "Seleucus," he observes, with minute attention to the prophecy, "at this time reigned over the nations which were beyond the Euphrates, and belonged to the bodies of the two first beasts; but after six years he conquered Antigonus" (one of the other four), "and thereby became possessed of one of the four kingdoms¹." And these five are the same whom Josephus enumerates; for it does not seem to me to be correct to say that Josephus "intimates that there were many more²." Nor again does it appear at all "evident," as has been asserted, from the language in which "the author of the first book of

¹ Chald. וְתַעֲלִינָהּ חֲמִשָּׁתָּה אֲרָבִּיּוֹת
תְּחִלָּתָהּ — "חֲמִשָּׁתָּה a rad. חָמַץ
1) species, maxime magna et
pulchra. Dan. viii. 5 חֲמִשָּׁתָּה קַרְנֵי
cornu conspicuum, magnum. v.
8. . . . et surgebant quattuor
conspicua (cornua). Sic enim
interpretandum videtur propter
comm. 5."—Gesen. Lex. in
voc.

² Observations, p. 173.

³ Dr. Todd says, (p. 173, Note,) "Josephus mentions five kings by name, but, at the same time, intimates that there were many more." He then quotes

from Josephus as follows:
'Αλέξανδρος μὲν οὖν . . . τελευτῶν
τὸν βίον μεταπεσούσης δὲ εἰς
πολλοὺς τῆς ἀρχῆς, Ἀντίγονος
μὲν τῆς Ἀσίας ἐπικρατεῖ, Σέ-
λευκος δὲ Βαβυλῶνος καὶ τῶν
ἐκεῖ ἐθνῶν, Ἀνσίμαχος δὲ τὸν
'Ελλάσποντον διεῖπε, τὴν δὲ
Μακεδονίαν εἶχε Κίσσανδρος,
Πτολεμαῖος δὲ ὁ Λάγον τὴν
Αἴγυπτον εἰλήφει. (Antiq. lib.
xii. 1.) In speaking of the
division of Alexander's empire
among "many," it appears to
me, Josephus clearly defines
his meaning to be the division
of the entire empire among
these five.

Maccabees mentions the division of Alexander's kingdom," "that the opinion of its being divided into *four* was not known to *him*³." The language of the writer of that book, I cannot but think, on the contrary, would perfectly harmonize with the statement of Josephus; and he seems, indeed, in this portion of his history, as I shall have occasion presently to shew, to have had prominently in view the very prophecy before us. After describing the victories of "Alexander, son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came out of the land of Chettiim," and smote "Darius, king of the Persians and Medes," and "reigned in his stead, the first over Greece," the historian of the Maccabees tells us, that Alexander's "servants bare rule, every one in his place. And after his death they all put crowns upon themselves; so did their sons after them many years; and evils were multiplied in the earth⁴." It is in language closely parallel, though not referring directly to this passage of the historian, that Sir Isaac Newton, in explaining the vision of the four beasts, observes, that the leopard "had four heads and four wings, to signify that it should become divided into four kingdoms;" "for it continued," he says, "in a monarchical form during the reign of Alexander the Great, and his brother Aridæus, and young sons Alexander and Hercules; and then brake into four kingdoms, by the governors of provinces putting crowns upon their own heads, and by mutual consent reigning over their provinces⁵." It is, therefore, strictly in accordance with the language of the book of Maccabees, that "the ancient commentators, with whom," as is stated, "this application of the

³ Todd, p. 172, Note.

⁴ 1 Macc. i. 1—9.

⁵ Observations, Part i. chap. 4, pp. 29, 30.

prophecy originated, St. Jerome⁶, Theodoret, and others, appear to have considered the first division of the dominions of Alexander, which took place immediately after his death, as equivalent to a fourfold partition of the empire⁷;" while the moderns are not, in fact, essentially at variance with them when they point out that it was not till some years later, *viz.* after the battle of Ipsus, that this division was formally and finally effected⁸.

But all doubt, if any remained, in regard to the application of the imagery before us is entirely removed, I think, by the language of the angel in the prophecy which is contained in the eleventh chapter, and which Sir Isaac Newton, with good reason, describes as "a commentary upon the vision of the ram and he-goat⁹." "There the angel tells Daniel," I am adopting Sir Isaac Newton's summary, "that 'there should stand up yet three kings in Persia, [Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspis,] and the fourth [Xerxes] should be far richer than they all; and by his wealth [strength] through his riches he should stir up all against the realm of Grecia.' This," says Sir Isaac Newton, applying the prophecy to the explanation of the imagery in the vision before us, "relates to the ram, whose two horns were the kingdoms of Media and Persia. Then," he observes, the angel "goes on to describe the

⁶ "St. Jerome," as Dr. Todd observes, "asserts expressly that four of Alexander's generals were typified by the four heads of the leopard, Dan. vii. 6. 'Quattuor autem capita eosdem dicit duces ejus, qui postea successores regni extiterunt, Ptolomæum, Seleucum, Philippum, Antigonum.' (Comm. in loc. et in viii. 8,

xi. 4.)

"And after Jerome, Theodoret gives the same exposition: *Διὰ δὲ τῶν τεσσάρων κεφαλῶν κ. τ. λ. . . .* (Comm. in Dan. vii. 6.)"

⁷ Todd, p. 172.

⁸ Ibid. p. 172—174. Vide Note, Appendix.

⁹ Observations, Part i. ch. 12, p. 169.

horns [horn] of the goat by the ‘standing up of a mighty king, which should rule with great dominion, and do according to his will;’ and by the breaking of his kingdom into four smaller kingdoms, and not descending to his own posterity¹.” “And when he shall stand up,” thus we read in the prophecy of the eleventh chapter, “his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven;”—the same expression precisely as in the vision before us;—“and not to his posterity,”—a prediction strikingly fulfilled in the history—“nor according to his dominion which he ruled;”—or, as it is expressed in the vision before us, “not in his power;”—“for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those².” It cannot, I think, be doubted by any one who, while he reads this prediction, bears in mind the history of Persia and Macedon, and of Alexander’s immediate successors, that it is to these kingdoms that that prophecy, and if that prophecy, then also the vision before us, clearly relates.

Strongly, however, as the language of these several prophecies, when compared together, confirms this, the ancient interpretation, their combined force is at once set at nought by the hypothesis which has lately been put forth, that not one of them, nor indeed any of the visions in the book of Daniel, have as yet been fulfilled, except so much of Nebuchadnezzar’s as relates to the head of gold³. With regard to that which is immediately before us, the opinion has been expressed, and maintained with much learning and argument, “that the kings of Media and Persia, foretold in this vision, as well as

¹ Obs. Part i. ch. 9, p. 124.

² Dan. xi. 4.

³ Todd, pp. 48. 61. 77. 128. 136. 186. 191, Note.

the king of Grecia, who is to vanquish them, are yet to come; that those countries, once the seat of such mighty empires, are destined once more to recover their long-lost power, and that in them shall be enacted the last great and fearful struggle between the prince of this world and the armies of the living God ⁴." But it is clear from the discourse which, in the tenth chapter, the angel holds with the prophet, that the kings of Persia and Grecia spoken of in the prophecies in question, were the sovereigns of the *ancient* empires of those countries; the kingdom of Persia being that under which the prophet was himself living, and the kingdom of Grecia that which was immediately to succeed it. "Fear not, Daniel," said the angel to him; "for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days." "Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince. Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth ⁵." Then follows the passage already

⁴ Todd, pp. 128, 129. ⁵ Dan. x. 12—14. 20, 21; xi. 1, 2.

referred to, concerning the succession of the kings of Persia, of whom the fourth should stir up all against the realm of Grecia. With this passage before us, revealing the conflicts which were at that very time going on amongst the powers of this world and of the world unseen, with reference to the chosen people and to the Church of God, it cannot be doubted, I think, that the kingdoms of Persia and Grecia were those which successively held the dominion of the ancient world—the second and third of the four monarchies represented in the earlier visions of Nebuchadnezzar and of Daniel.

But we must now proceed to the consideration of that which is the chief object in the vision before us, the tyrannical and impious power which the prophet beheld rising out of one of the four “notable horns” of the he-goat. “And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down⁶.” The interpretation by the mouth of the angel is this: “And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

⁶ Dan. viii. 9—11.

And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand⁷.” “This ‘little horn,’” Bishop Newton observes, “is by the generality of interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, ancient and modern, supposed to mean Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who was a great enemy and cruel persecutor of the Jews. So Josephus understands the prophecy, and says that ‘our nation suffered these calamities under Antiochus Epiphanes, as Daniel saw, and, many years before, wrote what things should come to pass.’ In like manner St. Jerome explains it of Antiochus Epiphanes, and says that ‘he fought against Ptolemy Philometor and the Egyptians,’ that is, “against the south;” and, again, “against the east,” and those who attempted a change of government in Persia; and, lastly, he fought against the Jews, took Judea, entered into Jerusalem, and in the temple of God set up the image of Jupiter Olympius.’ With St. Jerome,” as Bishop Newton observes, “agree most of the ancient fathers⁸, and modern divines and commentators;” who, at the same time, “all allow that Antiochus Epiphanes was a type of Antichrist⁹,” and that in this great enemy of the truth the prophecy was to obtain its full accomplishment.

But, notwithstanding such weight of authority in its favour, the Bishop, following Sir Isaac Newton,

⁷ Vv. 23—25.

⁸ [Theodoret, we may note, in particular, interprets the description of the little horn, throughout, of Antiochus; and

Chrysostom speaks of it as though there were no question on the subject.—Op. t. vi. p. 244.]

⁹ Bp. Newton, Diss. xv.

sets aside this interpretation. How far, however, the arguments of these distinguished writers are of force, and whether their premises do not rather tend to establish the conclusion which they oppose, will appear if we attentively follow their arguments. "This king," says Sir Isaac Newton, "was the last horn of the goat, the little horn which came up out of one of the four horns, and waxed exceeding great. The latter time of their kingdom was when the Romans began to conquer them, that is, when they conquered Perseus, king of Macedonia, the fundamental kingdom of the Greeks. And at that time the transgressors came to the full: for then the high-priesthood was exposed to sale, the vessels of the temple were sold to pay for the purchase; and the high-priest, with some of the Jews, procured a license from Antiochus Epiphanes to do after the ordinances of the heathen, and set up a school at Jerusalem for teaching those ordinances. Then Antiochus took Jerusalem with an armed force, slew 4000 Jews, took as many prisoners and sold them, spoiled the temple, interdicted the worship, commanded the Law of Moses to be burnt, and set up the worship of the heathen gods in all Judea. In the very same year [An. Nabonass. 580] the Romans conquered Macedonia, the chief of the four horns'." All this would seem, at first sight, strongly to favour the application of the prophecy to the times of Antiochus. Sir Isaac Newton, however, goes on to apply it to the Romans, in their conquests in the East and in Egypt (the beginning of those conquests dating thus from the time of Antiochus); their trampling upon "the people and great men of the

¹ Sir I. Newton, on Daniel, ch. 9, pp. 117, 118.

Jews," and putting to death the Messiah, their "Prince;" the taking away of the daily sacrifice, and the casting down of the place of the sanctuary, "in the wars which the armies of the Eastern nations, under the conduct of the Romans, made against Judea, when Nero and Vespasian were emperors;" "the pollution of the sanctuary by the worship of Jupiter Olympius," "in his temple built by the Emperor Adrian, in the place of the temple of the Jews;" and "the desolation of Judea made in the end of the Jewish war by the banishment of all the Jews out of their own country²."

But "this interpretation," it has been well observed by an able living writer, "has difficulties on the face of it not to be concealed; and these very serious ones." In particular, as he remarks, "Pagan Rome was not a portion of the Macedonian empire; and cannot be directly identified with a power which the prophecy describes as coming forth out of that empire;" "especially as the Romans never made Macedon a seat of empire, but merely subdued and incorporated it in the province of Greece. They never, consequently, appeared there in the character of a horn, or *kingdom*, of the subdivided Greek empire." "Neither does" Pagan Rome, as the same writer well observes, "in any just sense answer the type of a *little* horn. On the contrary, at the period of its first irruption, through Macedon, into the East, the Roman power was a great and notable horn³;"—

² Ibid. pp. 120—122.

³ "'Post Carthaginem, vinci neminem puduit.'—Florus, l. ii. c. 7. Such is the true picture of the conquering majesty of Rome, at her first appearance on the theatre of the Macedonian empire. The spirit of

hypothesis alone could identify a power like this, with the type of a *little* horn. In many respects the resemblances to the prophecy are very strong; but it seems vain to seek one here,—there is here *no* likeness."

or rather, we might say, "it was," as described in Daniel's former vision, a beast "dreadful, and terrible and strong exceedingly." And "that the parallel should thus fail at the outset,—that there should be a want of correspondence with the symbol which is the groundwork of the prophecy,—is," as has been well said, "a first objection to the interpretation, little short of fatal⁴." The objections thus stated appear to me entirely conclusive. There was no new kingdom of the Greeks established by the Roman victories: it was, indeed, rather "the latter end," the very termination of their kingdom, when Perseus, king of Macedon, was conquered. And to say, with Bp. Newton, that "the Roman empire, as a horn or kingdom of the goat," is said to be "mighty not by its own power," because it "drew its nourishment and strength from Rome and Italy"—the very seat of Roman empire,—seems a mere trifling with words. For, as the Bishop observes, "*there* (*i. e.* in Rome and Italy) grew the trunk and body of the tree, though the branches extended over Greece, Asia, Syria, and Egypt." And the branch could hardly be said to be strong, but not by its own strength, when its strength was derived from its own root growing thus in its native soil.

There is, indeed, one argument which may already have suggested itself as favouring the application of this prophecy to the Romans; and that argument, if it could be established, would indeed be decisive;—I allude to the reference made to "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet" in our Blessed Lord's prediction concerning the destruction of Jerusalem⁵. Undoubtedly, if it could

⁴ Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, vol. ii. pp. 436, 437.

⁵ Matt. xxiv. 15. Mark xiii. 14.

be shewn that the passage referred to is contained in the prophecy before us, it would determine at once the application of this prophecy to the Romans. But the special reference in our Lord's prediction seems rather to be to a subsequent prophecy of Daniel, *viz.* that of the seventy weeks⁶; and, as Bp. Newton himself tells us, in his comment upon another passage, later still in the book of Daniel⁷, where the same expression again occurs, "the 'setting up of the abomination of desolation' appears to be a general phrase, and comprehensive of various events." And the first instance which he notices of its application, is, "by the writer of the first book of Maccabees (i. 54), to the profanation of the temple by Antiochus, and his setting up the image of Jupiter Olympius upon the altar of God⁸."

And that it is indeed in the events of that period that we are to seek for the *primary* sense, at least, of the prophecy before us, we shall find, I think, very strong evidence in the language of the history just referred to. The first book of Maccabees, which is said to have been written originally in Hebrew, "is thought to have been compiled partly from the memoirs collected by Judas Maccabæus, and partly from those of John Hyrcanus, whose leadership began at the period where this book leaves off⁹." And it has been remarked, by a writer already quoted,

⁶ Dan. ix. 27.

⁷ Dan. xii. 11.

⁸ Comp. Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, vol. i. pp. 191, 192.

⁹ Cotton's *Five Books of Maccabees*, Introd. p. xxii. "Origen and St. Jerome assert, that they had seen the original in Hebrew, . . . Archbishop

Ussher, following St. Jerome, says, 'it is a book exactly translated out of the Hebrew, and containeth every where the brevity of Hebraisms of it.' . . . Others again, as Beveridge, in his '*Codex Canonum Vindicatus*,' contend that both books were originally written in Greek."

that “it is surprising that interpreters should not have more strongly noticed the clear reference of this prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes by the author of” that book. “The allusions,” in two verses in particular¹, he observes, “are peculiarly marked ;” and he thinks it “not to be doubted that the writer had” this passage of Daniel “in his eye².” After describing, in words already quoted, the victories of Alexander, who reigned “the first over Greece,” and the division of his kingdom among his servants ; and how “after his death they all put crowns upon themselves ; so did their sons after them many years, and evils were multiplied in the earth ;” the historian proceeds thus —“And there came out of them a wicked root,”—the very first words must recall to mind the description in the vision before us—“out of one of them came forth a little horn,”—“Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king, who had been an hostage at Rome, and he reigned in the hundred and thirty and seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks. In those days went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us : for since we departed from them we have had much sorrow. So this device pleased them well. Then certain of the people were so forward herein, that they went to the king, who gave them license to do after the ordinances of the heathen : whereupon they built a place of exercise at Jerusalem, according to the customs of the heathen : and made themselves uncircumcised, and

¹ Vv. 10 and 30.

² Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, vol. ii. p. 445, Note. It should be stated, at the same

time, that Mr. Forster contends for the *principal* application of the prophecy to Mahometanism alone.

forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do mischief³."

We seem to trace here the signs of the time "when the transgressors" were "come to the full⁴." And how "fierce of countenance" was the tyrant, and "understanding dark sentences," deep in craft and policy; "his power mighty, but not by his own power," not by any real power of his own—for, all the while, he was trembling before the advancing arms and menacing authority of the Romans; and how he destroyed wonderfully, prospering and practising, to the destruction of "the mighty and the holy people;" "through his policy" also causing "craft to prosper in his hand;" magnifying himself in his heart, and by peace destroying many⁵—all this is told at large in the history. There we read, in particular, how, "after that Antiochus had smitten Egypt, he returned again . . . and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, and entered *proudly* into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof, and the table of the shewbread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the veil, and the crowns, and the golden ornaments that were before the temple, all which he pulled off. He took also the silver and the gold, and the precious vessels; also he took the hidden treasures which he found. And when he had taken all away, he went into his own land, having made a great massacre, and *spoken very proudly*. Therefore there was great mourning in Israel, in every place where they were . . . The land also was moved for the inhabitants thereof, and

³ 1 Macc. i. 10—15. ⁴ Dan. viii. 23. ⁵ Vv. 23—25.

all the house of Jacob was covered with confusion. And after two years fully expired the king sent his chief collector of tribute unto the cities of Juda, who came unto Jerusalem with a great multitude, and *spake peaceable words* unto them, *but* all was *deceit*: for when they had given him credence, he fell suddenly upon the city, and smote it very sore, and *destroyed much people* of Israel. And when he had taken the spoils of the city, he set it on fire, and pulled down the houses and walls thereof on every side. . . . Then builded they the city of David with a great and strong wall, and with mighty towers, and made it a strong hold for them. And they put therein a sinful nation, wicked men, and fortified themselves therein. Thus they shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and *defiled it*: insomuch that the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them. . . . Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness, her feasts were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into reproach, her honour into contempt. . . . Moreover, king Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and every one should leave his laws: so all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king. Yea, many also of the Israelites consented to his religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the sabbath. For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Juda, that they should follow the strange laws of the land, and *forbid burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings, in the temple*; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days: and pollute the sanctuary and holy people: set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean beasts: . . . to the end they might

forget the law, and change all the ordinances... Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side⁶."

Thus was "the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation" fulfilled, as concerning the giving of the sanctuary "to be trodden under foot⁷." And as regards "the host⁸,"—the sacred host, that is, (as it would appear,) of the priests and Levites, who were appointed in their stations "to wait upon the service," or (as it is in our marginal rendering of the passage in the book of Numbers) "to war the warfare in the service of the tabernacle⁹,"—we read in the second book of Maccabees, which carries the history further back, how that, "when Antiochus, called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias laboured underhand to be high priest, promising unto the king by intercession three hundred and threescore talents of silver, and of another revenue eighty talents:" and "beside this, he promised to assign an hundred and fifty more, if he might have license to set him up a place of exercise, and for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen, and to write them of Jerusalem by the name of Antiochians. Which when the king had granted, and he had gotten into his hand the rule, he forthwith brought his own nation to the Greekish fashion. . . . Now such was the

⁶ 1 Macc. i. 20—54.

⁷ Dan. viii. 13.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Num. viii. 24. וְלִבְיָטָא

: וְלִבְיָטָא אֱלֹהִים מִלְחָמָה
Comp. v. 25, "They shall

cease waiting upon the service thereof"—marg. "return from the warfare of the service."

¹ Or, as in Archdeacon Colson's Version, "to inscribe some of Jerusalem citizens of Antioch."

height of Greek fashions, and increase of heathenish manners, through the exceeding profaneness of Jason, that ungodly wretch, and no high priest; that the priests had no courage to serve any more at the altar, but despising the temple, and neglecting the sacrifices, hastened to be partakers of the unlawful allowance in the place of exercise, after the game of Discus called them forth²; not setting by the honours of their fathers, but liking the glory of the Grecians best of all³." To refer again to the language of the vision itself⁴, the interpretation of which by the angel⁵ is, as we have seen, so closely reflected in the facts of the history,—thus did the little horn "wax great even to (or, "against") the host of heaven," and "cast down to the ground some of the host, and of the stars"—the spiritual lights of the Jewish Church and people—"and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him⁶ the daily sacrifice was taken away⁷, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice"—the rival hierarchy of a false idolatrous worship⁸—"by reason of transgres-

² Or, "after the challenge of the discus."—Cotton.

³ 2 Macc. iv. 7—15.

⁴ Dan. viii. 10—12.

⁵ Vv. 23—25.

⁶ The marginal references here are to "Ch. 11. 31, and 12. 11. 1 Mac. 1. 44—64."

⁷ Or, as it may be rendered, "he took away from him the daily sacrifice."—וּמִפְּנֵי הַרִּימָה

(הורם קרי) הַתָּמִיד.

⁸ Or, as in the marginal rendering, "the host was given

over for the transgression against the daily sacrifice."

Or, as it may also be rendered, "the host was given over, together with the daily sacrifice, for transgression."

וְצָבָא תִּנְתָּן עַל־הַתָּמִיד בְּפִשְׁעֵי

The omission, however, of the article before the noun which is the subject, is in favour of the rendering in the text of our Authorized Version. And there is considerable authority on its side. "Vulgatus Hebræa sic reddit; *robur autem datum est*

sion’,” and “it cast down the truth to the ground: and it practised and prospered.”

I have quoted thus largely from these ancient histories,—though, indeed, the record they contain of corruption and impiety might with advantage have been cited at still greater length,—not only because they give the events themselves in their original and native colouring, but also as tending to remove the objections which have been urged, by Sir Isaac and by Bishop Newton, against the ancient interpretation which I have endeavoured to maintain. The strongest of these objections are, that, in the first place, Antiochus was but one individual in a line of monarchs reigning over an old kingdom, whereas a horn would seem to denote a new and distinct empire and succession of kings; and again, that neither the power of Antiochus, nor the result of his attempts against the holy people, corresponds with the description in the prophecy; and still further, that he did not stand up against the prince of the host of heaven, the prince of princes,—which is the character not of Antiochus, but of Antichrist,—nor cast down the sanctuary to the ground. We have seen, however, I think, in the history of his acts of pride and irreligion, that which sufficiently answers to these expressions; and the greatness of his power,

huic cornu *contra jure sacrificium*, ad interrompendum illud, *propter peccata* populi Judaici. Quod Lutherus sequitur Eodem plane modo Syrus. . . . Grotius prius hoc versus hemistichium sic interpretatur: *et exercitus*, i. e. præsidium Antiochi, *dabitur*, imponetur urbi, *contra jure sacrificium per sce-*

lus, coll. 1 Macc. i. 47, et Josephi Antiqq. l. xii. cap. 5. § 4.”—Rosenmüller. Schol. in loc.

’ Or, “into the power of transgression,” or of the transgressors.—Vid. Rosenmüller. Schol. The marginal references here are to “1 Macc. i. 11, &c. 2 Macc. iv. 13—17.”

as indeed that history would shew, is to be estimated not as secular historians would regard it—for in this respect, doubtless, his kingdom was weak; he was indeed (if we may employ the language of the prophecy) “mighty, not by his own power;”—but rather as the representative and instrument of that irreligious principle, that spirit of ungodliness and apostacy, which was embodied in his impious policy. And in this point of view he might fitly be represented as a new horn coming up out of one of the four kingdoms of the Grecian empire—“a wicked root,” in the language of the book of Maccabees already quoted;—not the mere outward temporal power of an earthly king or kingdom, but, like that other little horn of the fourth beast, “diverse from them,”—a form and development of pride and self-will, made up, perhaps, partly of superstition, but possibly still more of irreligion and infidelity, exercising under a specious garb its crafty tyranny in the “high places” of this world’s dominion.

There remains but one point for consideration; and it is one which has given great perplexity to expositors, and, in particular, has been urged as an insuperable objection to the application of the prophecy before us to the times of Antiochus. I refer to the duration of the calamities here foretold as declared by the heavenly voice which the prophet heard after he had beheld the vision. “Then I heard one holy one¹ speaking, and another holy one said unto that² certain holy one which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, (or ‘that maketh desolate,’) to give both the sanctuary

¹ Or “Saint,” E. V.

² “Or, the numberer of se-

crets, or, the wonderful numberer.”—Marg. E. V.

and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days,"—more literally, "evenings and mornings³," "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed⁴." The mention here made of the cleansing of the sanctuary would naturally suggest the reference to that passage in the history of the Maccabees when, after two great victories over the forces of Gorgias and Lysias, the captains of Antiochus, "then said Judas and his brethren, Behold our enemies are discomfited; let us go up to *cleanse and dedicate the sanctuary*. Upon this all the host assembled themselves together, and went into Mount Sion. And when they saw the sanctuary desolate and the altar profaned, and the gates burned up, and shrubs growing in the courts as in a forest, or in one of the mountains, yea, and the priests' chambers pulled down; they rent their clothes and made great lamentation, and cast ashes upon their heads, and fell down flat to the ground upon their faces, and blew an alarm with the trumpets, and cried toward heaven. Then Judas appointed certain men to fight against those that were in the fortress, until he had *cleansed the sanctuary*. So he chose priests of blameless conversation such as had pleasure in the law, who *cleansed the sanctuary*, and bare out the defiled stones into an unclean place⁵."

The best ancient interpreters, Jewish and Christian, seem to have found no difficulty in applying the prophecy to these events. Josephus refers to it in a way that implies unconsciousness of the possibility of any question being raised upon it. He singles out the vision before us as a proof of Daniel's

³ "Heb. *evening morning*."
Marg.

⁴ Vv. 13, 14.

⁵ 1 Macc. iv. 36—43, referred to in marginal references.

having “written and left behind what makes manifest the accuracy and undeniable veracity of his predictions⁶ ;” “insomuch,” he says, “that such as read his prophecies and see how they have been fulfilled, would admire Daniel for the honour wherewith God honoured him ; and may thence discover how the Epicureans are deceived, who cast Providence out of human life, and do not believe that God takes care of the affairs of the world, nor that the universe is governed and continued in existence by a Being of a blessed and immortal nature. Wherefore,” he goes on to say, “from the forementioned predictions of Daniel, those men seem to me to err very much from the truth, who determine that God exercises no providence over human affairs ; for if it were the case, that the world went on by mechanical necessity, *we should not behold all things coming to pass according to his prophecy*’.” Among these things, in the detailed account which he had just given of this vision of Daniel and its interpretation, Josephus notices specifically the time during which the sacrifices of the temple were to cease ; though, quoting from memory, as it would seem, and having in mind, though not accurately, another period of days elsewhere marked by the prophet, he speaks of the vision as declaring that the sacrifices should not be offered “for one thousand two hundred and ninety-six days,” or, as he presently afterwards states it, “for three years time⁸.”

⁶ ὅθεν τὸ τῆς προφητείας ἀκριβὲς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπαράλλακτον ἐποίησε δῆλον. φησὶ γάρ, κ. τ. λ. He had mentioned it just before, as distinctive of Daniel’s prophecies, in comparison with others, that he specified *times*. οὐ γὰρ τὰ μέλ-

λοντα μόνον προφητεύων διετέλει, . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ καιρὸν ὥριζεν. εἰς ὃν ταῦτα ἀποβήσεται.

⁷ οὐ γὰρ ἂν κατὰ τὴν ἐκείνου προφητείαν . . . πάντα ἐωρῶμι ἀποβαίνοντα.

⁸ —“καὶ τὰς θυσίας κωλύσθαι γενέσθαι ἐφ’ ἡμέρας χιλίας δ

St. Jerome refers the prophecy to the same period of the history, in the like undoubting manner. "Let us read," he says, "the books of the Maccabees, and the history of Josephus; and there we shall find it written, that in the hundred and forty and third year from Seleucus, who first reigned in Syria after Alexander, Antiochus entered into Jerusalem, and laid every thing waste, and, returning in the third year, placed the statue of Jupiter in the temple; and that to the time of Judas Maccabeus, that is, to the hundred forty and eighth year, through six years of the desolation of Jerusalem, and three of the pollution of the temple, were two thousand three hundred days and three months completed; after which the temple was cleansed. Some," he proceeds to tell us, "for two thousand three hundred read two thousand two hundred: in order that there may not seem to be six years and three months over. This passage," he continues, "most of our authors"—meaning, of course, the Christian—"refer to Antichrist; and say that what under Antiochus was done in type, is to be, under him, fulfilled in verity⁹.

κοσίας ἐνενήκοντα ἕξ . . . καὶ τὰς θυσίας ἐπ' ἔτη τρία κωλύσονται ἐπιτελεσθῆναι.' καὶ δὴ ταῦτα συνέβη τῷ ἔθνει παθεῖν ὑπ' Ἀντιόχου τοῦ Ἐπιφανοῦς, καθὼς εἶδεν ὁ Δανιήλος, καὶ πολλοῖς ἔτεσιν ἔμπροσθεν ἀνέγραψε τὰ γενησόμενα.—*Antiq. Jud. lib. x. cap. 11. 7.*

⁹ "Hunc locum plerique nostrorum ad Antichristum referunt; et quod sub Antiocho in typo factum est, sub illo in veritate dicunt esse complendum." Bp. Newton says, "The difficulty, or impossibility rather, of making these

two thousand three hundred days accord with the times of Antiochus, I suppose, obliged the ancients to consider Antiochus as a type of Antichrist: and therefore Jerome saith in his comment, that this place most Christians refer to Antichrist, and affirms that what was transacted in a type under Antiochus, will be fulfilled in truth under Antichrist." This, however, would not at all appear from Jerome's words; but the very reverse. The reference to Antichrist was evidently quite independent of

But that which he addeth, 'the sanctuary shall be cleansed,' signifieth the times of Judas Maccabeus, who from the city of Modin, his brethren and neighbours striving together with him, and many of the people of the Jews, vanquisheth the generals of Antiochus near Emmaus, which is now called Nicopolis. Which when Antiochus heard, who had risen up 'against the prince of princes,' that is, the Lord of lords and King of kings, desiring to spoil the temple of Diana in Elymais, which is a region of the Persians, which temple contained precious gifts, and having there also lost an army, he was 'broken without hands,' that is to say, perished by sickness of sorrow. And the 'evening and morning' signifieth the succession of day and night¹."

It may be that in the days of Josephus, or even in those of St. Jerome, there were sources of information accessible, and knowledge of times and the modes of computing them, which we do not now possess; and indeed, in the preface to his commentary on Daniel, St. Jerome refers to the writings of many historians whose works are now lost, as necessary for the understanding of the prophet².

any difficulty as to the number of days; for no difficulty of that kind, it would seem, did Jerome find in the passage; though the various reading indicated that others had found a difficulty.

¹ S. Hieron. *in loc.* t. iii. pp. 1105, 1106.

² "Ad intelligendas autem extremas partes Danielis, multiplex Græcorum historia necessaria est: Suctorii, videlicet, Callinici, Diodori, Hieronymi, Polybii, Posidonii, Claudii, Theonis, et Andronici cogno-

mento Alympii, quos et Porphyrius esse sequutum se dicit: Josephi quoque, et eorum quos ponit Josephus, præcipueque nostri Livii, et Pompeii Trogi, atque Justini, qui omnem extremæ visionis narrant historiam: et post Alexandrum usque ad Cæsarem Augustum, Syriæ et Ægypti, id est Seleuci, et Antiochi et Ptolemæorum bella describunt."—Præf. in Dan. S. Jerome does, however, on the passage before us, only refer to the books of the Maccabees and to Josephus.

And it may, for aught we know, have been Divinely ordered, that Christians should thus be led onward, from resting in any supposed complete fulfilment of the vision in the times of the earlier dispensation, to look for, and prepare themselves against, a season of trial such as that which would appear to be reserved for the latter days of the Church on earth. For, according to the general belief of the early ages, there was yet to be revealed in his time a tyrannical and infidel power of which Antiochus was but a type, even "that Wicked One whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming³."

Among recent expositors the interpretation has been gaining ground, which would refer the vision before us to that Antichristian power which has established itself, now for many ages, in Eastern Christendom, and holds under its dominion the countries which formed the ancient empire of Macedon. And certainly many striking particulars have been pointed out, in which Mahometanism closely corresponds with the prophetic description. I might mention particularly its sudden growth from small beginnings, its power and tyranny so cruelly and contemptuously exercised over the Christians; setting up in their desecrated sanctuaries its false worship; trampling down with insult their bishops and clergy; and, with its rival hierarchy and priesthood, and its spurious counterpart of the Christian system, standing up against the Prince of princes, in arrogant pretension of higher claims to Divine authority in the person of its false prophet⁴. On this view of the prophetic vision, the evenings and

³ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

⁴ See, especially, Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, vol. i. pp. 166—189.

mornings which are numbered in it, being regarded as equivalent to “prophetic” days, are understood to denote so many years; the number here given, two thousand three hundred, being taken to include the whole vision from its commencement. The only question which then remains to be determined has reference to the *period from which* the vision is to be understood to commence. It deserves, however, to be considered whether the expression “evening and morning,” adopted, as it would appear, with special reference to the daily sacrifice, would not seem rather to mark that they are *literal* days that are here spoken of. And the general correspondence which, in many points of its course, may be traced between the Jewish Church and the Christian, and more particularly the special relation of type and antitype in which, according to the belief of ancient times, Antiochus and Antichrist stand to each other, would rather incline us to recognize in the vision before us a prophetic disclosure that, “in the last end of the indignation,” there was to be a season of trial—its days in mercy numbered—through which the Church of Christ was to pass, in her course of probation, “in the latter time of the kingdoms” in the midst of which her lot has been cast, and as His coming draws nearer for whom she looks, who is the blessed and only Potentate, “the Prince of princes.” And it is worthy of remark, that when first, in the twelfth century, in the revival of awakened interest in the interpretation of prophecy, disfigured as it was by much wild and strange speculation, the doctrine of prophetic days, as denoting years, was explicitly brought forward, it was believed that, at the end of the symbolic days of years, there was to be accomplished the like period

of literal days⁵. And this, indeed, would seem to correspond with what we read in the Apocalypse, first of the ministry of the two witnesses which was to last for “forty and two months,” three years and a half, and then of their state of death for three days and a half⁶.

But, whatever may be the destined duration of the period described; whether what we are to look for be the continued waning, until its final extinction, of a power which has for ages cast a baleful influence on the fortunes of the Christian Church in the East; or whether we are rather to expect some new development, in more open and arrogant rebellion, of Antichristian impiety and oppression, in the East as well as in the West⁷; thus much we know from the sure word of Him who is the Truth, and who has attested that Divine word by wonderful accomplishments of its darkest visions in elder times, that whosoever he be,—whatsoever power, whatsoever form of Antichrist—which thus “shall stand up against the Prince of princes,” he “shall,” in the appointed time, like the tyrant of old, “be broken without hand.” “And,” though we know not how or when it shall be accomplished, if it has not, indeed, as yet received its accomplishment, save only in type and prefiguration, yet “the vision of the evening and morning is true,” and every particular concerning it shall assuredly at length be fully cleared up.

“The times of prophecy,” as Bishop Horsley has

⁵ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁶ Rev. xi. 3. 9.

⁷ On this view, the vision before us might be found to be the carrying on, and completing of the vision of the four beasts,

in that *latter* part of its disclosure concerning the little horn, which unfolds the mystic period of “a time and times and the dividing of time.”

admirably observed, “are certainly the last things that will be understood; being described by such marks as they may certainly be known by, when they arrive, and discerned when they approach; but not foreseen at any considerable distance. For we are expressly told, that it is not for us to know, *i. e.* to foreknow, the times and the seasons. Daniel,” he continues, referring particularly to the twelfth chapter,—but it applies equally to the vision before us,—“overhears angels asking questions about the time of the end; but he receives no direct information about it himself, except in terms which he cannot understand. The angels, when they are overheard by him, speak the same mystic language; and when Daniel requests an explanation, it is refused, (Dan. xii. 6—9;) “for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.” And so in like manner, in the words before us, it is said,—“the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days^s.” “However,” continues the same able and learned prelate, “as the book which Daniel sealed (xii. 4) was unsealed when the visions of the Apocalypse were exhibited to St. John, we may hope that new light will break upon the subject every day. For ‘the time of the end,’ that long period which is called ‘the last time,’ is not only set in, but much of it, probably by far the greater part, is passed by. . . . But ever since its commencement, the prophecies which relate to these last times have been in a state of progressive accomplishment. It becomes us therefore,” he goes on to say, “upon whom the ends of the world

^s Ver. 26.

are surely come, to be reverently attentive to the prophetic dates; not to use them, as the generality of interpreters have vainly attempted, as a key to the sense of the prophecy: but, on the contrary, we should seek first the sense of the prophetic images; and, last of all, we should seek such an exposition of the numbers as will adjust them to the date of those observed events. This is the only way in which the numbers will ever be explained⁹."

Meanwhile, there is a trial of our faith and patience, as well as of our diligence and watchfulness, in discerning the signs of the times, and so preserving ourselves from the evil; and this we may do, though the knowledge of the times themselves be hidden from us. For "the vision is yet for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith¹." There is a merciful purpose in all the orderings of His wisdom who spake the word of prophecy and governs the world of providence. "For the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." May we thus live, ever "looking for and hasting unto" that which is the end of all vision and prophecy, even "the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall shew who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

⁹ Dissertation on the Prophetical Periods, published in the British Magazine, vol. iv.

pp. 717—719.

¹ Hab. ii. 3, 4.

LECTURE V.¹

DAN. xi. 45.

“ And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”

THE prophecy of which these words form part, and which, together with the description of the circumstances attending its delivery, occupies the last three chapters of the book of Daniel, may be regarded (as I have already had occasion to observe) as an inspired commentary on the vision which lately engaged our attention,—that of the ram and the he-goat. It differs from that and other prophetic portions of this book, in the distinguishing circumstance that we have not here, as elsewhere, the symbolical imagery of a prophetic vision, which is afterwards interpreted; but a direct prophecy, delivered by the mouth of the same Angelic being, as it would seem, who had before been sent to the prophet, to make him to understand the former vision.

It was in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that this revelation was made to “ Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was

¹ Preached Jan. 8, 1843.

true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision².” The prophet describes the appearance of the heavenly messenger whom he saw as he “was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;” the awful majesty of his presence, and the amazement and terror with which it overwhelmed him; and how afterward, “an hand touched him,” and raised him from the ground, and words of comfort and encouragement were spoken to him,—“Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.” But while the prophet, for three whole weeks, had been engaged in fasting and mourning, there had been a conflict among the powers in heavenly places and upon earth. “The prince of the kingdom of Persia,” said the Angel, “withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days³.” Again the prophet fell to the ground when he heard words like these spoken unto him; “and behold one like the similitude of the sons of men touched” his lips, and enabled him to answer; “and there came again and touched” him “one like the appearance of a man, and strengthened” him, “and said, O man, greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak;

² Dan. x. 1.³ Vv. 5—14.

for thou hast strengthened me. Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince. Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth⁴.”

This passage, which immediately introduces the prophecy before us, with so strange a glimpse of that which the book of Revelation describes as “war in heaven⁵,” I have already had occasion to refer to⁶, as furnishing what appears to me to be incontestable proof, that the kingdoms of Persia and Grecia spoken of in this prophecy, as well as in the vision of the ram and he-goat, were those of the ancient world, and not, according to a recent hypothesis, kingdoms yet future. The first few verses of the prophecy have been already considered, in their application as a comment on the former vision. “Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia⁷.” The prediction was exactly fulfilled in the history of the Persian monarchy. After Cyrus, in the third year of whose reign the prophecy was delivered, there stood up three kings in Persia, *viz.* Cambyses, Smerdis the Magian, and Darius the son of Hystaspes; and the fourth, Xerxes, was one who was distinguished by

⁴ Vv. 15—21. Chap. xi.
1, 2.

⁵ Rev. xii. 7.

⁶ Vid. *supr.* pp. 100—102.

⁷ Chap. xi. 2.

nothing so much as by his "riches:" for, in the words of Justin, "if you consider this king, you may praise but his riches, not the general; of which there was so great abundance in the kingdom, that when rivers were dried up by the multitude of his army, yet the king's wealth remained unexhausted⁸." And we know how, "by his strength through his riches," he was able to "stir up all against the realm of Grecia." The Greek historian tells us that, in making the levy of his army, Xerxes searched every place of the continent; for of the armies of which we know, "this," he says, "was by far the greatest: for what nation was there, that Xerxes led not out of Asia into Greece?" "Nor was Xerxes content with stirring up the east, but was for stirring up the west likewise, and engaged the Carthaginians in his alliance, that, while he with his army overwhelmed Greece, they might fall upon the Greek colonies in Sicily and Italy; and the Carthaginians for this purpose not only raised all the forces they could in Asia, but also hired a great number of mercenaries in Spain, and Gaul, and Italy; so that their army consisted of three hundred thousand men, and their fleet of two hundred ships. Thus did Xerxes 'stir up all against the realm of Grecia'.⁹" And thus remarkably does every point in the prophetic description, few as are the lines drawn in the rapid sketch of events, correspond with the facts of the history.

From the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, the Angel passes on at once to the reign of the conqueror who, by the arms of Greece, overthrew the Persian empire. For it is manifestly of Alexander, as we have already seen, that the Spirit of prophecy

⁸ See Bp. Newton, Diss. xvi. Part 1.

⁹ Ibid.

speaks, when it is said—"And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will¹." Nor are the subsequent fortunes of that kingdom less clearly delineated, as I endeavoured on a former occasion to shew², in the verse immediately following, which describes the breaking up of his kingdom, and its division toward the four winds of heaven.

To the application, however, of the foregoing description to Alexander and his empire, it has been objected, "that 'the mighty king' is not said to be a Grecian potentate;" that "for aught that appears to the contrary, he may be a fifth king of Persia; and" that "the opinion which seeks to identify him with Alexander rests altogether on the supposed analogy between this prophecy and the vision of the ram and goat, where the power symbolized by the great horn of the goat, is expressly said to be the first king of Grecia." We are told still further, that "the unbiassed reader would naturally infer from the words of the prophecy, if we are to date its commencement from the period at which it was delivered, that between Cyrus and the 'mighty king,' who is supposed to be Alexander the Great, four kings only were to sit upon the Persian throne;" whereas "the murder of Xerxes, the fourth of the successors of Cyrus, took place more than a century before the accession of Alexander to the throne of Macedon; and in this interval there reigned in Persia no less than nine sovereigns, the last of whom, one hundred and thirty years after the death of Xerxes, was conquered by Alexander³."

¹ Ver. 3. So St. Jerome, tur."
"Perspicuè de magno Alex-
andro rege Macedonum loqui-

² Vid. supr. pp. 95—100.

³ Todd, pp. 170, 171.

In reply to these arguments I would observe, that the identity of object, at this point, between the prophecy before us and the vision of the ram and he-goat seems to be established, beyond controversy, by the general correspondence, which we before already traced, between them:—"the mighty king" here spoken of would appear clearly to be the same with the first king of Grecia, represented there by the great horn of the goat. It is to be observed, moreover, that in the passage before us there is nothing to lead us to suppose, that the "mighty king" who was to "stand up" and "rule with great dominion," was to succeed immediately to the fourth king of Persia, the invader of Greece; and the silence of the inspired record on this point is the more observable as contrasted with the definite marking of the place which that king was to occupy in the line of the successors of Cyrus⁴. Again, the description of the mighty king's dominion, viewed by the light of the history, would certainly, I think, rather suggest the idea of a distinct empire; and when we consider that "Xerxes," as Bp. Newton observes, "was the principal author of the long wars and inveterate hatred between the Greeks and Persians," and that "his expedition was the most memorable on the one side, as Alexander's was on the other,"—the Macedonian turning back upon Asia the tide of war which in the Persian invasion had set in upon the shores of Greece,—we shall see how the Spirit of prophecy would easily pass from the one to the other; and this by what in human language would be fitly styled a masterly outline, a

⁴ "Behold, there shall stand up yet *three* kings in Persia; and the *fourth* shall be far richer than they all. . . . And a *mighty king* shall stand up. . . And . . . *his kingdom*, &c."

philosophical view of events, throwing into the shade those which are unimportant, seizing the main features of the history, and exhibiting the great links which connect it together as a whole. St. Jerome long ago remarked upon the omission in question, observing “that the prophetic Spirit did not care to follow minutely the order of the history, but to touch all the remarkable events⁵.” And indeed in those nine reigns of the later kings of Persia, how few readers of history are there who could point to any important occurrences as recorded by profane historians! The Spirit of prophecy has sketched perfectly the great outline of the history.

The application to Alexander’s empire of the prophetic description of the division of the great king’s dominion toward the four winds of heaven, I endeavoured on a former occasion to establish. The prophecy goes on to trace the fortunes of two only of these kingdoms,—namely, of “the king of the south” and “the king of the north”—that is, as has been generally understood, the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria. “These two,” says Bp. Newton, “were by far the greatest and most considerable: and these two, at one time, were in a manner the only remaining kingdoms of the four; the kingdom of Macedon having been conquered by Lysimachus, and annexed to Thrace; and Lysimachus again having been conquered by Seleucus, and the kingdoms of Macedon and Thrace annexed to Syria. These two likewise,” the Bishop observes, “continued distinct kingdoms, after the others were

⁵ “Et notandum quòd, quatuor post Cyrum regibus Persarum enumeratis, novem præterierit, et transierit ad Alexandrum. Non enim curæ fuit

spiritui Prophetali historiæ ordinem sequi; sed præclara quæque perstringere.” — S. Hieron. *in loc.*

swallowed up by the power of the Romans. But there is a more proper and peculiar reason," he adds, "for enlarging upon these two particularly; because Judea, lying between them, was sometimes in the possession of the kings of Egypt, and sometimes of the kings of Syria; and it is the purpose of holy Scripture to interweave only so much of foreign affairs, as hath some relation to the Jews; and it is in respect of their situation to Judea, that the kings of Egypt and Syria are called the kings of the 'south' and the 'north.' "

But here it is objected that, since commentators "acknowledge that a division 'towards the four winds of heaven' must mean a division into north and south, east and west;" and accordingly tell us that "Cassander reigned in Greece and *the west*, Lysimachus in Thrace and *the north*, Ptolemy in Egypt and *the south*, and Seleucus in Syria and *the east*;" and since they "admit also that 'the king of the south' in the prophecy denotes the king of Egypt, or of the southern division;" it is inconsistent to "maintain that by 'the king of the north' the prophet meant, not the king of Thrace, the northern section of the empire, but the king of the eastern section, or Syria." And again, if the titles of the two kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, as the kingdoms of the south and the north, be interpreted with reference to the land of Palestine, "Palestine," it is argued, "should have been made the centre from which 'the four winds of heaven' were also estimated as north, south, east, and west'."

This latter argument, surely, savours somewhat of the spirit of a too minute criticism; though, in one

⁶ "Newton, Diss. xvi. Faber, Sacred Calendar, vol. ii. p. 191."

⁷ Todd, p. 179.

sense, indeed, criticism cannot be too minute as applied to Scripture ; and its effect will constantly be, to bring to light the wonderful accuracy of Scripture language, amid all the vividness of its imagery, and the breadth and vastness of its scenes. But it is a precision alike unpoetical and unphilosophical which would require that if, in describing the breaking up of Alexander's empire, it is spoken of as "divided toward the four winds of heaven," and the historian can point to so many kingdoms as having risen out of the ruins of that empire, toward the four points of the compass, the prophet may not place himself, as it were, at a different centre, when, with his eye fixed, at a subsequent period of the history, on the destiny of the Jewish people,—for this was declared to be the main subject of the prophecy ⁸,—he speaks of the kingdom of the north, and the kingdom of the south, with special reference to the country which lay between them. For it was this peculiar position which made the circumstances of the chosen people in "the latter days" of their history to be full of more than ordinary interest and danger. "On the death of Alexander," says a modern historian of the Jews, writing with no view to prove or illustrate the fulfilment of prophecy ⁹, "Judea came into the possession of Laomedon, one of his generals. On his defeat, Ptolemy, the king of Egypt, attempted to seize the whole of Syria. He advanced against Jerusalem, assaulted it on the Sabbath, and met

⁸ Vid. chap. x. 14, sup. cit. "I am come to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people* in the latter days." And so St. Jerome observes, "Idcirco autem cætera regna dimittens, Macedoniæ scilicet et Asiæ, tantum de Ægypti et

Syriæ narrat regibus. Et scripturæ sanctæ propositum est, non externam absque Judæis historiam texere ; sed eam quæ Israeli populo copulata est."—Hieron. *in loc.* p. 1122.

⁹ Vid. Note, Appendix.

with no resistance. . . . The conqueror carried away 100,000 captives, whom he settled chiefly in Alexandria and Cyrene. In a short time, following a more humane policy, he endeavoured to attach the Jewish people to his cause, enrolled an army of 30,000 men, and entrusted the chief garrisons of the country to their care. Syria and Judea," the writer continues, "did not escape the dreadful anarchy which ensued during the destructive warfare waged by the generals and successors of Alexander. Twice these provinces fell into the power of Antigonos, and twice were regained by Ptolemy, to whose share they were finally adjudged after the decisive defeat of Antigonos at Ipsus." "The founding of the Syro-Grecian kingdom by Seleucus, and the establishment of Antioch as the capital, brought Judea," we are told shortly after, "into the unfortunate situation of a weak province, placed between two great conflicting monarchies¹." And looking on those two monarchies from the land which was in the immediate view of the prophecy, and at the same time bearing in mind the common manner of speaking among the Jews, we could scarcely imagine a designation which, while the names of Egypt and Syria were to be concealed, would more completely identify these two kingdoms, than that of the kingdom of the south and the kingdom of the north.

But, to meet the objection before stated in its strongest point—for, as I have before said, it is well for us to be led to study the language of Inspiration in its most minute particulars—the king of Syria *had*, in fact, by the conquest of Lysimachus, already mentioned, become "the king of the north," if we take

¹ Milman's *History of the Jews*, vol. ii. pp. 32, 33.

“the north” in its strictest sense, to denote Thrace and the northern provinces of the empire, before the time when he, or rather, the inheritor of his throne, is styled in the prophecy “the king of the north.” Thus strictly accurate does the language of the prophecy prove to be, when more closely examined. “Having annexed the kingdoms of Macedon and Thrace to the crown of Syria,” Seleucus Nicator “was become master of three parts out of four of Alexander’s dominions.” The ancient historians designate him as “the conqueror of the conquerors,” and “the greatest king after Alexander².” Thus did he, according to the prophecy, “have dominion, and his dominion” was “a great dominion³.” And thus did he become what his successors are styled, though, as I have observed, *he is not*, “the king of the north⁴.”

The prophecy now goes on to trace the varied history of the relations of peace and war, of alliances and conflicts, between the two monarchies; and most remarkable, certainly, as we follow it from step to step, is the correspondence between the prophecy and the history. So exact, indeed, did it appear to the great enemy of Christianity in the third century, the infidel Porphyry, that his only resource was to maintain that the prophecy must have been written after the event; labouring to prove, and triumphantly appealing to, its accuracy as conclusive against the notion that it *could* have been written before it. And it is indeed a wonderful record, so “particular and circumstantial,” and that, in regard to events the most varied, and relations the most complicated. “There is not,” to quote the words of Bp. Newton,

² Bp. Newton, referring to Justin and Appian.

³ Ver. 5.

⁴ Vid. Note, Appendix.

“so complete and regular a series of the kings” of Egypt and Syria, “there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs, to be found in any author of those times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No one historian hath related so many circumstances, and in such exact order of time, as the prophet hath foretold them⁵.”

But I must pass over the history of many reigns, sketched in few lines, yet with graphic fidelity, to consider more particularly that which introduces the central object of the prophecy. In the twenty-first verse, mention is made of “a vile person” which should “stand up,” “to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom; but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.” From the place which he occupies in the succession of the kings of the north, the person here described is undoubtedly Antiochus Epiphanes, whose reign held so prominent a place in the vision of the ram and the he-goat, according to the interpretation which, on a former occasion, we saw reason to adopt, in conformity with the judgment of Antiquity. And the description here given corresponds closely with the character of Antiochus, and the circumstances of his successful usurpation of the throne⁶. “And with the arms of a flood,” says the prophecy, “shall they be overflown before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant⁷,” that is, as Theodoret explains it, the high-priest of the Jews⁸.

⁵ Newton, Diss. xvi. Part i. *ad fin.* Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁶ Theodoret, interpreting the prophecy of Antiochus, refers to the description in the preceding vision (viii. 25) as parallel. Vid. Note, Appendix.

Compare the historians cited by Bp. Newton, and others.

⁷ Ver. 22.

⁸ λέγει γὰρ τὸν ἀρχιερέα τὸν εὐσεβῆ, τὸν τοῦ Ἰάσωνος ἀδελφόν, κ.τ.λ.

And we saw how that “little horn” of the he-goat “waxed great even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them”—removing the good Onias from his office, and putting into it the apostate Jason on the terms of a corrupt and wicked covenant. “And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully:”—and so, we find, it came to pass that Jason himself was soon deposed, and his brother Menelaus, on higher bribes, put into his place by the aid of an armed force; “for he shall come up,” it is said, “and shall become strong with a small people⁹;”—like that “little horn” which “waxed exceeding great¹.” “He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers’ fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time².” And so we read in the first book of Maccabees that, in the liberal giving of gifts, Antiochus “abounded above the kings that were before him;” and “when the kingdom was established before him,” he “thought to reign over Egypt, that he might have the dominion of two realms³.”

“And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him⁴.” The history in the first book of Maccabees is a close commentary upon this passage. “Where-

⁹ Ver. 23.

¹ Chap. viii. 9.

² Chap. xi. 24.

³ 1 Macc. i. 16.

⁴ Ver. 25.

fore he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy, and made war against Ptolemee, king of Egypt; but Ptolemee was afraid of him, and fled, and many were wounded to death. Thus they got the strong cities in the land of Egypt, and he took the spoils thereof⁵.” The prophecy goes on to mark still more minute particulars, which, amid some obscurity and difficulty, the records of history still remaining enable us in great part to verify, concerning the causes of the defeat of Ptolemy Philometor, and the hollow peace between him and Antiochus. “Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow,” or rather, “be overflowed;” “and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings’ hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed⁶.” “For,” we are told, “Antiochus pretended to take care of his nephew Philometor’s interest, and promised to restore him to the crown, at the same time that he was plotting his ruin” and, “on the other side, Philometor professed great obligations to his uncle, and seemed to hold the crown by his favour, at the same time that he was resolved to take the first opportunity of breaking the league with him, and of being reconciled to his brother.” But “this artifice and dissimulation did ‘not prosper’ on either side; for these wars were not to have an ‘end’ till ‘the time appointed,’ which was not yet come⁷.”

“Then shall he return into his land with great

⁵ 1 Macc. i. 17—19. Theodoret refers to this passage.

⁶ Vv. 26, 27.

⁷ Bp. Newton, *in loc.* Diss. xvii.

riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land⁸.” Here, again, the book of Maccabees seems to reflect accurately, in the facts of its history, the language of the prophecy. After telling us how Antiochus, having gotten “the strong cities in the land of Egypt,” “took the spoils thereof,” the historian proceeds: “And after that Antiochus had smitten Egypt, he returned again in the hundred forty and third year, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, and entered proudly into the sanctuary”—then follows the description of the “exploits” of sacrilege which the impious king committed there⁹—“and when he had taken all away, he went into his own land¹.” “Both the Greek and the Roman history relate,” St. Jerome observes, “that after Antiochus returned, being driven out by the Egyptians, he came into Judea, that is, ‘against the holy covenant,’ and spoiled the temple, and took away very much gold; and, having placed a garrison of Macedonians in the citadel, returned into his own land².”

But the prophecy proceeds—“At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter”—or, as it is rendered in the Vulgate, “the latter shall not be as the former³. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy

⁸ Ver. 28.

⁹ Cf. sup. cit. p. 109.

¹ 1 Macc. i. 20, 21. 24.

² S. Hieron. *in loc.* quoted by Bp. Newton.

³ “Non erit priori simile novissimum.” Heb. וְלֹא־תִהְיֶה

כְּרִאשֹׁנָה וְכְאַחֲרֹנָה “In verbis Hebraicis *Caph* similitudinis geminatum denotat paritatem, etiam interposita copula *Vav*, ut Ies. iv. 11. 1 Sam. xxx. 24. Ezech. xviii. 4.”—Rosenmüller. Schol. *in loc.*

covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant⁴.” We read, in the second book of Maccabees, that “about the same time” that Menelaus, the high-priest, “through the covetousness of them that were in power,” “remained still in authority, increasing in malice, and being a great traitor to the citizens,” “Antiochus prepared his second voyage into Egypt⁵.” And the Greek and Roman historians tell us how he was turned back by “the ships of Chittim,” as the prophecy describes them; the Roman ambassador meeting him on the shore, and peremptorily commanding him to depart; so that he led back his forces into Syria, as Polybius says, “grieved and groaning, but yielding for the present to the necessity of the times⁶.” And in the second book of Maccabees we are told how, “removing out of Egypt in a furious mind,” having heard tidings of what he supposed to be a revolt of Judea and Jerusalem, “he took the city by force of arms . . . And there were destroyed within the space of three whole days fourscore thousand Yet was he not content with this, but presumed to go into the most holy temple of all the world; Menelaus, that traitor to the laws and to his own country, being his guide; and taking the holy vessels with polluted hands, and with profane hands pulling down the things that were dedicated by other kings to the augmentation, and glory, and honour of the place, he gave them away⁷.”

“And arms shall stand on his part,” the prophecy

⁴ Vv. 29, 30.

⁵ 2 Macc. v. 1. (Comp. chap. iv. 50.) Theodoret refers also to this portion of the

history, as fulfilling the prophecy in the text.

⁶ See Bp. Newton.

⁷ 2 Macc. v. 11—16.

continues, “and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate⁸.” The passages of the history which give the primary fulfilment, at least as I conceive, of this prediction, I have before quoted in part, for the illustration of the vision of the ram and the he-goat⁹, where we read of “the daily sacrifice” being “taken away” from the prince of the host, “and the place of his sanctuary cast down,”—“the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation¹.” For “arms”—that is, a military force, did “stand on” the tyrant’s “part,” when he sent “that detestable ringleader,” as he is called in the history, “Apollonius, with an army of two and twenty thousand, . . . who, coming to Jerusalem, and pretending peace, did forbear till the holy day of the Sabbath, when, taking the Jews keeping holy day, he commanded his men to arm themselves. And so he slew all them that were gone to the celebration of the Sabbath, and running through the city with weapons slew great multitudes².” “Then builded they the city of David with a great and strong wall, and with mighty towers, and made it a strong hold for them. And they put therein a sinful nation, wicked men, and fortified themselves therein. They stored it also with armour and victuals, and when they had gathered together the spoils of Jerusalem, they laid them up there, and so they became a sore snare; for it was a place to lie in wait against the sanctuary, and an evil adversary to Israel³.” Then follows the account of the letters which the king “sent unto Jerusalem and the

⁸ Ver. 31.⁹ Cf. sup. pp. 109—111.¹ Dan. viii. 11. 13.² 2 Macc. v. 24—26.³ 1 Macc. i. 33—36.

cities of Judah," to "forbid burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings in the temple, and that they should . . . pollute the sanctuary and holy people;" and also how "they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side ⁴."

If these events be regarded as fulfilling the prophecy immediately before us, we have here the completion of that series of acts of profaneness which marked the reign of Antiochus, as described in the history and foretold in the former vision; and which reached their height in this last stage of impiety—the pollution of the sanctuary, the taking away of the daily sacrifice, and the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate. By several distinguished modern interpreters, however, as the learned Mede, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, and others⁵, this passage is referred to the destruction of Jerusalem; the main argument for this interpretation being the reference made by our Lord to "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet⁶." But the allusion in that place, as I have already had occasion to observe⁷, would seem to be to another passage in the book of Daniel, *viz.* the prophecy of the seventy weeks. The translation which these writers adopt of the first clause in the verse before us, rendering it "and *after* him arms shall stand up,"—by which they would understand the rise of the Roman power, which from the time of Antiochus began to have the dominion in the East,—is not, I think, supported by the usage of the Hebrew

⁴ Ibid. vv. 44—46. 54. cf. Jews.
sup. pp. 110, 111.

⁵ S. Jerome (*in loc.*) mentions this interpretation as that which was adopted by the

⁶ Matt. xxiv. 15. Comp. Mark xiii. 14. Luke xxi. 20.

⁷ Vid. sup. p. 107.

particle ⁸. And, certainly, to any one following the course of the prophecy from verse to verse, and comparing the history with it, transitions so sudden as those which, on this hypothesis, are introduced in this and the verses following,—passing rapidly over long intervals of time, and changing, at once, from great minuteness of detail to the most summary glancing at a few leading events far distant from each other,—would seem to require strong proof to overcome the antecedent objection. The interpreters in question, referring the verse last cited to the destruction of Jerusalem, apply the context immediately following to the persecutions which the early Christians underwent, the propagation of the faith through their teaching, the establishment of Christianity by the civil power, and the continued trial, in these and later persecutions, of the professors of a pure religion. These events, it is supposed, are sketched out in the verses which describe the exploits of “the people that do know their God;” “the men of understanding among the people instructing many;” and falling “by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days;” and then subsequently their being “holpen with a little help,” while many should “cleave to them with flatteries⁹.” I am inclined to think that the whole of this description is to be understood, as indeed it is by Theodoret,—and by St. Jerome, in its *primary* application, at least,—to refer to the affliction and martyrdoms of the *Jewish* Church in the reign of Antiochus, and in the times immediately following; to the energetic exploits of the Maccabees; and the trials which they

⁸ חֲרָעִים מִמֶּנּוּ יַעֲמִדוּ Vid. ⁹ Vv. 32—34.

Note, Appendix.

endured who continued in an age of apostacy faithful to their religion, and in faith and patience awaited the end ¹.

But, having now brought to its close, as it would seem, the history of that scene of searching trial in the latter days of the elder dispensation, the prophecy, according to the view of it which is sanctioned by high authority in Christian Antiquity, would seem henceforth to be occupied almost entirely with the description of that tyrannical and persecuting power of which Antiochus was the type—I mean the great predicted Antichrist. And, indeed, it is to the times of Antichrist that St. Jerome, adopting, as it would appear, the views of those who had gone before him, would refer principally, or at least for its fullest and final accomplishment, some parts of the preceding description, from the point where the “vile person” first appears upon the scene ². But from the thirty-sixth verse, according to that interpretation which has the consent of Christian Antiquity in its favour, the type seems to be lost sight of, and the antitype to be almost exclusively in view. “And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done.” The description certainly corresponds closely with that which the apostle gives, in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, of “that wicked,” or rather “lawless one ³,” to “be revealed in his time,” “who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ⁴,” and also with

¹ See Theodoret, *in loc.* For St. Jerome, *vid. inf.* and Note, Appendix.

² Ver. 21.

³ ὁ ἄνομος.

⁴ 2 Thess. ii. 4. Comp. v. 8.

the description, in the vision of the four beasts, of the little horn which had “a mouth that spake very great things,” even “great words against the Most High ⁵.”

The transition which, according to this view of the prophecy, is made, in the passage before us, from the type to the antitype is, I would remark, of an essentially different character from that which I just now pointed out as creating a difficulty in the interpretation offered by some modern expositors. In a prophecy which bears the character of a chronological sketch of the history, historical truth seems to require a certain uniformity of scale in the delineation of the objects and events contained in it; and we should expect to find some intimate, though, it may be, not an obvious relation, some strong link of connexion to be traced, wherever, from the minute detail of the occurrences of a few years, we are carried, with scarcely more than an allusion to a few leading events, over the range of many centuries ⁶. But the case is different when from one period of history, strongly marked with a typical and prefigurative character, we are transported at once to another in which the type is fulfilled. To use an illustration which may make my meaning more clear, it is, in this latter case, as if, in the visible heavens, when the eye had been attracted by the appearance of the bow in the cloud, and was watching closely its form and colours, suddenly we saw another arch, of deeper and brighter hues, of which we now perceive the former to have been but the faint reflection,—and on this, therefore, while the vision lasts, our eye is henceforth fixed exclu-

⁵ Dan. vii. 20, 25.

⁶ The sketch of the Persian history in v. 2, referred to by

St. Jerome (vid. sup. p. 130), is altogether different. Compare Note, Appendix.

sively. In like manner, if a period like the reign of Antiochus should appear to have been providentially appointed as an exhibition, in type, of what Antichrist was to be in the latter days of the Christian Church, it would cause no great surprise or perplexity, if we found the Spirit of Prophecy passing at once from the one to the other; especially if in each case it entered, with something of the like detail, into the circumstances which develop the fearful form of pride and impiety. The ancient interpreters quote, as parallel instances, those descriptions, in the book of Psalms, of the kingdom of David or Solomon, which from the type pass on to the antitype, the kingdom of the Messiah; and again, as another example, the transition, in our Lord's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, to His final coming at the end of the world'. The delineation of "the wilful king,"—for so he has been commonly designated by our modern expositors,—would appear to be drawn on the same scale, if I may so speak, with that of the tyrant who typified him: there is a certain uniformity and proportion observed throughout.

But we must proceed with the description of his character and exploits, which are set forth in language evidently graphic, but, at the same time, very difficult of interpretation. "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate (or 'on his pedestal') shall he honour the God of forces," or, as it is in the marginal rendering, "Gods protectors;"—but the Hebrew word, and indeed the construction

' Vid. Note, Appendix.

of the whole verse, is obscure and difficult:—"and a God whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain." This description has, by many of our most eminent interpreters, such as Mede, and Lowth the commentator, Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, been applied to the Greek or Roman empire under the Emperors of Constantinople in the East,—the immediate scene of the prophecy before us. They have regarded it as describing the corruptions of religion established by the authority of the empire, the encouragement of monasticism, the veneration of saints and images, and the gain derived from such corruptions. These latter particulars, however, even if the language of the prophecy be proved to be properly applicable to them, can scarcely be made to combine with the interpretation which, by some at least of these writers, is given of the first point in the description of the lawless king—*viz.* the disregarding the God of his fathers; by which is understood the casting off of the Pagan worship in the conversion of the empire under Constantine. This, as Bishop Newton admits, can hardly form part of a description, the whole character of which is marked by the reproach of *apostacy*; and it may fairly be questioned whether those corruptions of pure and primitive Christianity, which he would understand to be here described, can in any sense be considered as fulfilling the prediction of the wilful king's disregarding the God of his fathers, and exalting himself above all. In

particular it may be observed, that the words rendered “the desire of women⁸,” by the analogy of the apparently parallel form of expression in which the Messiah is spoken of as “the desire of all nations⁹,” have been interpreted of that “seed of the woman” whom the mothers in Israel looked for, to be born of them; and thus the disregard, by the wilful king, of “the God of his fathers” and of “the desire of women,” would answer, in some sort, to St. John’s marks of the predicted Antichrist, the denying the Father and the Son¹. The “God-denying apostacy,” as it has been fitly designated, might well be included in the view which would interpret this whole passage with reference to modern Infidelity; especially as it unfolded itself in the last century,—most fearfully, indeed, in a neighbouring country, but threatening, at the same time, to convulse the whole of Europe and of the civilized world,—casting off the bonds of religion, setting at nought the best affections of human nature, making every thing subservient to self-exaltation, deifying military glory, and parting out the whole world as the prize of ambition and rapacity. Superstition and infidelity are, indeed, more nearly akin than they might at first sight appear; inasmuch as they both derive their strength from the wilfulness of the human heart, set upon the indulgence of its own ill-regulated desires and unsubdued affections. And forms

⁸ חֲמֵדַת נָשִׁים

⁹ חֲמֵדַת כָּל־הָגוֹיִם — Hag.

ii. 7. Comp. חֲמֵדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

1 Sam. ix. 20. In the former of these, the only exactly parallel instances, the second or

governed noun would seem to denote, not the *object* of desire, but the *subject*—that in which desire exists. In regard to all the three passages, however, there has been doubt, and diversity of interpretation.

¹ 1 John ii. 22.

of evil, apparently unconnected with each other, may, on a deeper view, be found but different developments of the spirit of Apostacy, more or less mature, various in character, but the same in end and aim; as put forth by the same great enemy, who in every age, but more fearfully, as we are taught to believe, as "the latter days" draw to their close, will seek, either by open violence or by secret craft, to draw men away from their faith and obedience, and to enthrone himself in the seat of God².

The prophecy goes on to describe a final contest between rival powers. "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him : and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships ; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many shall be overthrown : but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries : and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver; and over all the precious things of Egypt : and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him : therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain ; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." By those expositors who regard the Roman empire in the East as

² Vid. Note, Appendix.

the main subject of the preceding prophecy, the assaults here described, of the kings of the south and of the north, are interpreted of the invasions of the Saracens and the Turks, respectively; and the concluding verses have been applied, with much ingenuity and skill, to the great Antichristian power of the East advancing rapidly under the Turkish arms, till it finally established its throne in the capital of Eastern Christendom³. There seems, however, amongst expositors generally a disposition to look rather to future times for the fulfilment of the concluding portion of the prophecy. But, whatever we are to understand by the planting of the tabernacles of the palaces—the pavilion or camp—of the great enemy in “the glorious holy mountain,” the description here given seems closely to resemble that which the Apostle gives of that Wicked One, that Man of Sin, or lawlessness, who, as God, shall sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God⁴; or the description, in earlier prophecy, of that type of impious pride, who is represented as saying in his heart, “I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God⁵: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High⁶.” Whether we refer it to that which seems to have been the general expectation of early times—*viz.* the actual enthronement of Antichrist, in a personal form, in the holy mountain of the literal Jerusalem; or understand it

³ See Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, Sect. ii. vol. i. pp. 193—209.

⁴ 2 Thess. ii. 4.

⁵ Comp. Dan. viii. 10. “And it waxed great, even to the host

of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.”

⁶ Isa. xiv. 13, 14.

rather as describing, under symbolic imagery, the Christian Church⁷; the end of his pride and power is the same with that of the little horn in the vision of the ram and the he-goat—when he should stand up against the Prince of princes—namely, that he should “be broken without hand⁸.” His end is the same with that of the other little horn, of the fourth beast, whose dominion the judgment was to “take away,” “to consume and to destroy it unto the end⁹;” or with that which is described in the prediction of St. Paul, concerning that Wicked One whom “the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming¹.” The same sentence of utter destruction is pronounced here—“he shall come to his end, and none shall help him².”

The fall of the Antichristian power is to be followed by a great deliverance of the true Israel, even of “every one that shall be found written in the book,”—a deliverance wrought from them by the standing up of Michael, “the great Prince,” said the Angel to the prophet, “which standeth up for the children of thy people,” and bringing them through “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time³.” And with this great deliverance is joined the awaking of “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt,” and the revelation of the glory wherewith “they that be wise⁴”—the men of understanding spoken of before in the prophecy,

⁷ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁸ Dan. viii. 25.

⁹ Chap. vii. 26.

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

² Ver. 45.

³ Dan. xii. 1.

⁴ הַמְּשִׁכִּילִים

as instructing many, and falling martyrs to their faithful zeal⁶—“shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel,” the Angel adds, “shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased⁶.” “Then I Daniel looked,” saith the prophet, “and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river”—the Angel whom he first saw in the vision—“How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished⁷.” The language of this passage supplies another link connecting the prophecy before us with both of the two earlier visions which we have before considered—with the vision of the four beasts, as well as that on which, as has been already remarked, this prophecy may be regarded as a commentary—viz. the vision of the ram and the he-goat. In this latter vision, it is said of the “king of fierce countenance,” symbolized by the little horn of the goat, that he should “destroy the mighty and *the holy*

⁶ Chap. xi. 33. “And they that *understand* among the people (וְיִמְשְׁכִילֵי עַם) shall instruct many.” Comp. v. 35.

דְּמִשְׁכִּילִים.

⁶ Dan. xii. 2—4.

⁷ Vv. 5—7.

*people*⁸;" while of the little horn of the fourth beast it was declared, that the saints of the Most High "shall be given into his hand *until a time and times and the dividing of times*⁹." And this would seem to strengthen the supposition of Bishop Horsley,—a supposition formed during the height of the revolutionary tempest, and the outbreak of infidelity, toward the close of the last century,—that "the wilful king" described in the chapter before us, the last of Daniel's prophecies, is "the Antichristian power in its plenitude and perfection,"—"the genuine Antichrist, St. Paul's man of sin, in the utmost height and horror of the character," "formed by a strange confederacy between the two little horns," described in the former visions, "a coalition of the two in one government, extending over the whole tract of the ancient Roman empire¹." Such a combination of the powers of evil, joining their forces for the last great struggle against the powers of heaven, will seem no strange supposition to those who have studied well the word of Prophecy, and have also traced, in the history of the warfare of truth, the workings of "the mystery of iniquity," under the various forms which human wilfulness will assume,—Infidelity leaguings itself even with Mahometan imposture, or seeking to revive the strength, while it would wield, for its own purposes, the power which has taken possession of the long established seat of dominion in Western Europe, the capital of ancient Rome.

If still, while these visions are yet unfulfilled, obscurity hangs over them, we must be content to

⁸ Chap. viii. 24.

⁹ Chap. vii. 25.

¹ Letters to the Author of

"Antichrist in the French Convention." *British Magazine*, vol. v. p. 134.

wait, in faith and patience, as prophets did of old, abiding the time which shall at length clear up the mystery. Twenty years had well-nigh passed since the former vision, revealed to Daniel, had left him “astonished” at its hidden import which “none understood²”; and now, when it seemed as though its meaning were to be unfolded³, darkness still rested upon it. “I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end⁴.” Meanwhile these disclosures, though still veiled in mystery, were to serve a moral purpose: like the events which they foretold, they were to try men’s spirits, and reward the spiritually wise by deeper insight into their meaning. “Many shall be purified, and made white⁵, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand⁶.” Faith, and patience too, would be called into exercise; for, beyond the mystic period described as “a time, times, and an half”—*i. e.* as it would appear, three years and a half, or a thousand two hundred and sixty days—the time of trial was to extend to a thousand two hundred and ninety days, from the time that the daily sacrifice was to be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up⁷.

² Dan. viii. 27. The vision of the ram and he-goat was seen by the prophet “in the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar,” (ver. 1.) *i. e.* A.D. 553. The later vision, and prophecy of “the Scripture of truth” was “in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia,” *i. e.* A.D. 534.

³ Chap. x. 1. “In the third

year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belshazzar: and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.”

⁴ Chap. xii. 3, 9.

⁵ Ver. 10.

⁶ Ver. 11.

It cannot be doubted, I think, that the events here referred to are the same which are described, whether in regard to the type or to the antitype, in the preceding prophecy; and if so, we have here a strong confirmation of the objection already urged against the application of that passage to the destruction of Jerusalem⁷. Interpreters, who differ widely on other points, seem agreed in referring the passage before us to the times of Antichrist. The dating of the periods here marked from the destruction of Jerusalem has been rendered impossible by time: twelve hundred and ninety years, taking the days as prophetic years, have long since expired, and the vision has not yet come to its close.

Into the question concerning these periods, their commencement and their termination, I shall not enter at present, especially as they will come before us again in the visions of the Revelation; I would only repeat the sound and valuable remark which I have before quoted from Bishop Horsley, that “the times of prophecy are certainly the last things that will be understood.” And while it is our duty to watch the openings of prophetic events, and with this view “to be reverently attentive to the prophetic dates,” it seems expressly forbidden us to foreknow the times and the seasons: and therefore to undertake the task, is to expose ourselves not merely to the *risk*, but to the *certainty* of failure. For one thing, at least, the prophecy seems to prepare us,—namely, an apparent tarrying of the vision. Beyond the two periods already mentioned, a further period is marked, extending five and forty days beside. “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to

⁷ Vid. sup. pp. 106, 107.

the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days⁸.” What should take place at the end of those days was not further revealed, save as it was implied in the promise which assured to the “man greatly beloved” his own share in the happiness and glory of that blessed and holy consummation. “But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days⁹.”

And may we, warned by the visions of Prophecy, and its fearful delineations of the manifold spirit of evil, so keep ourselves amid the perils of the latter days, and so faithfully watch and wait for the end, that, “purified and made white” in the day of trial, we may have our lot with “the people of the saints of the Most High” in the great day of recompense.

⁸ Ver. 12.

⁹ Ver. 13.

LECTURE VI.¹

REV. v. 8—10.

“ And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”

HAVING now considered, in order, the several visions in the book of Daniel which concern the Church of Christ and the power of Antichrist, we may proceed to that which must be regarded as the main subject of our inquiry—*viz.* the visions of a kindred character which are contained in the Revelation of St. John. Had this latter Divine book alone entered into our view, it would have been not less important to examine, as preliminary to it, the earlier disclosures of prophecy made to the “man greatly beloved,” whose visions, in the general character of their imagery, as well as the prophetic periods—one in particular—marked out in them, re-appear, in so

¹ Preached Feb. 5, 1843.

remarkable a manner, in the revelations vouchsafed to the beloved disciple. The book of Daniel seems, as it were, the ante-chamber, the outer court and entrance of the sacred building whose inner sanctuary is more fully revealed in the visions of the Apocalypse. And our only hope of obtaining an insight into the meaning of these latter, must be in the careful study of the former—indeed, of all the preceding disclosures of prophetic Scripture; or, to speak more correctly, of the one great volume of Divine Prophecy.

For, in truth, the more attentively we examine it, the more striking proofs shall we discover of its essential unity,—that all came from the inspiration of one Omniscient Spirit, who, “in sundry times and in divers manners,” “spake by the prophets².” And in regard to the book of the Revelation, in particular, we shall find, as we proceed, that it bears stamped upon it, in a very remarkable manner, a character corresponding with the place in which it stands in the volume of Holy Writ, as the winding up of all that had gone before; absorbing into itself, if I may so speak, the sum and substance of earlier prophecies—the unfolding of mysteries which had “been kept secret from the foundation of the world³,” or but partially and faintly shadowed out in the types and visions of the elder dispensation. And if to any one the deep obscurity which hangs over this portion of Scripture should appear to be such, as would make the humble mind shrink from what might seem to be knowledge too wonderful and “excellent” for it, too “high” for it to hope to “attain unto,” it may justly plead, beyond the general claim on our devout attention, of all that God’s

² Heb. i. 1.

³ Matt. xiii. 35.

Holy Spirit has “written for our learning,” that special promise of blessing which, in entering upon this course of inquiry, I pointed to, as the Divine sanction for such investigations, if only they be conducted in a reverential and self-distrusting spirit. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein : for the time is at hand.” “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book⁴.” Only let him who would undertake such investigations, adopt and make his own, out of deep and unfeigned feeling, the prayer with which the pious and learned Mede entered upon the study of this mysterious volume of Divine Prophecy. “Thou that sittest on the throne, and Thou, O Lamb, the Root of David, who alone wast worthy to take this book and open it; Open the eyes of thy servant, direct his hand and his mind, that in these thy mysteries he may discover and draw forth something, to the glory of thy Name, and the benefit of the Church⁵.”

The first chapter of the book of the Revelation describes the vision of glory and majesty which

⁴ Rev. i. 3 ; xxii. 7.

⁵ Works, p. 419. “Tu qui throno insides, Tuque Agne, Stirps Davidis, qui solus dignus eras librum hunc accipere et aperire ; aperi oculos servi tui, manum ei mentemque dirige, ut in hisce misteriis tuis aliquid cernat promatque, ad Nominis tui gloriam et Ecclesiæ emolumentum.” *Clavis Apocalyp-tica, Prænoscenda.* “Quod superest, Lector, en tibi ordinem et seriem juxta res gerendas

omnium in Apocalypsi Vaticiniorum . . . Retegat Deus oculos mentis utriusque nostrum, ut intueamur mirabilia ejus. Amen.”—p. 431. “Christe, Dei Sapientia, cui Apocalypsis à Patre data est, ut indicares servis suis res futuras, illumina jubare suo mentem meam, immunditiem sanguine deterge. Da, Te favente, Spirituque duce, abdita hæc mysteria perlustrem, aliisque pandam.”—p. 437.

appeared to St. John in the isle of Patmos, when he “was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day⁶ ;” and which, with a voice as of a trumpet, bade him write in a book the things which he saw, and send it to the seven Churches of Asia. The Divine and awful Form which he beheld, strikingly resembles, while it surpasses it in glory, that which, in the last vision of Daniel, appeared to the prophet upon the waters of the river Hiddekel⁷. In other points of the description we are reminded rather of that which had been given, in a former vision of the same prophet, of “the Ancient of days⁸” whom he beheld seated on His throne; and to whom, as the prophet “saw in the night visions,” “one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion an everlasting dominion which” should “not pass away, and his kingdom that which” should “not be destroyed⁹.” The mystery thus dimly shadowed out to the prophet, was revealed more fully to the apostle. He beheld “one like unto the Son of man,” yet, at the same time, appearing in the form as of “the Ancient of days;” One who was invested with high dominion as “*the prince of the kings of the earth*¹ ;” of whom it was declared, “Behold, he cometh with clouds² ;” and who is revealed as the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty³.”

⁶ Rev. i. 10.

⁷ Comp. Rev. i. 13 — 15 with Dan. x. 5, 6.

⁸ Comp. Rev. i. 14 with Dan. vii. 9.

⁹ Dan. vii. 13, 14.

¹ Rev. i. 5.

² Ver. 7.

³ Ver. 8.

Having thus made known Who it was from whom the message came, the beloved disciple proceeds to record the words of mingled commendation and warning which he was commanded to write, severally, to the seven Churches. These epistles occupy the second and third chapters: in the fourth, the main vision opens, which continues to unfold through the remainder of the book.

“I looked,” says St. John, “and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven⁴.” It had been foretold, in the Divine interpretation of the first vision contained in the book of Daniel,—Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the image,—that, “in the days of those kings” whose successive empires were represented by the several parts of the image, “the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which” should “never be destroyed⁵.” And in the vision of the four beasts, revealed to the prophet himself, he “beheld till thrones were set”—for so, as we have already had occasion to observe⁶, it should be rendered,—“and the Ancient of days did sit⁷.” In like manner, St. John beheld a “throne set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald⁸.” Here again we are reminded of the language of a vision of earlier prophecy,—that which appeared to

⁴ Rev. iv. 1, 2.

⁵ Dan. ii. 44.

⁶ Vid. sup. p. 85.

⁷ Dan. vii. 9.

⁸ Rev. iv. 2, 3.

Ezekiel “by the river of Chebar,” when “the heavens were opened, and” he “saw visions of God⁹.” Having described the mysterious form and appearance of the four living creatures which came out of the whirlwind and cloud, and the brightness, and the appearance in the midst of it as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire¹, the prophet tells us that “above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw,” he says, “as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it. . . . As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord².”

But the apostolic prophet of the Revelation goes on to describe further the vision of the heavenly kingdom. “And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders”—or rather, “*the* four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold³.” And here we must revert again to the scene described in Daniel’s vision, when he “beheld till thrones were set, and the Ancient of days did sit,” and “judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom⁴.” For, according to the interpretation given him by “one of them that stood by,”—one of the angelic minis-

⁹ Ezek. i. 1.¹ Ver. 4.² Vv. 26—28.³ Rev. iv. 4.⁴ Dan. vii. 9. 22. Cf. sup. p. 85.

ters in the heavenly courts,—“the saints of the Most High” were to “take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever⁵.” For the interpretation of that vision of the prophet Daniel, St. Jerome refers to the passage before us. “The many thrones,” he says, “which Daniel saw, seem to me to be those which John calls the four and twenty seats. And ‘the Ancient of days’ is He who in St. John sitteth alone upon the throne.” St. Jerome refers also to that passage in the Gospel, in which our Lord promised to His Apostles, that “in the regeneration when the Son of Man” should “sit in the throne of his glory,” they also should “sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel⁶.” The mention of “the four and twenty elders” seems to contain a reference to the councils of elders who sat for judgment in the courts of the temple of Jerusalem, and in the chief cities of the Jews⁷; but specially to the four and twenty courses of the priests and Levites⁸, like unto whom, in their white raiment, these four and twenty elders are arrayed. It has been supposed, also, that the doubling of the number of the tribes of Israel might be designed to represent the new kingdom and Church of Christ, as composed of Jew and Gentile⁹, made “one kingdom of priests,” one “holy nation¹”; or, again, the joining together in one of the old and the new dispensations, represented by the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel,

⁵ Ver. 18.

⁶ Vid. sup. p. 86, note ¹.

⁷ Lewis's *Origines Hebrææ*, b. i. ch. 6 (vol. i. pp. 61. 65—67.)

⁸ 1 Chron. xxiv. 4; xxv. 8—31. See Lewis, b. ii. ch.

7. Mede, p. 439. Woodhouse, Annot. p. 106.

⁹ See Daubuz on the Revelation, by Lancaster, pp. 202, 203.

¹ Comp. Exod. xix. 6, with 1 Pet. ii. 9.

and “the twelve apostles² of the Lamb.” Or perhaps since, as has been observed by an able and judicious interpreter, “the point of time when this vision opens and the four and twenty elders appear, would seem to be antecedent³ to the coming of Christ in the flesh,” they may better be understood to represent those “spirits of just men made perfect,” to whom St. Paul applies the name of “elders,” the patriarchs and prophets of old time⁴. At all events, in the vision of St. John we seem to have the fulfilment of the remarkable language in which the prophet Isaiah, from describing how “God, in his judgments” on the earth, should “advance his kingdom⁵,” and going on in the following chapter to describe the blessings of that kingdom, in imagery which can be interpreted only of the new dispensation, says,—“Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, (or “elders,”) gloriously⁶.”

“And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God⁷.” In a vision of the prophet Zechariah we find the same imagery, which, according to the interpretation there given by the Angel, seems to denote the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts⁸: and from the salutation with which the book of Re-

² “By some commentators they have been supposed to belong to the Old Testament, by others to the New, exclusively; but they may belong to both, (so Mede,) for all are saved by the same Christian efficacy; and the purer worship of the one is typified and pre-

figured in the more formal services of the other.” Woodhouse.

³ Comp. chap. v. 6.

⁴ Woodhouse’s Translation, &c. pp. 99—102.

⁵ Heading of chapter, E. V.

⁶ Isai. xxiv. 23.

⁷ Rev. iv. 5.

⁸ Zech. iv. 2. 6. 10.

velation opens, of grace and peace “from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ⁹,” it is evident that the symbol here employed denotes the Third Person of the Ever-blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit of God, in His manifold influences and operations.

“And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal;”—another image borrowed from the Jewish temple with its molten sea;—“and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts,”—or rather, as it should be rendered, “living creatures” (for the word is not *θηρία*, but *ζῶα*¹)—“full of eyes before and behind. And the first living creature was like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature had a face as a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those living creatures give”—or rather, “shall give²—glory and honour and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders will fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and the honour and the power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created³.”

⁹ Rev. i. 4.

¹ See Woodhouse's Translation, p. 106. Whitley, pp. 424

—428.

² δώσουσι.

³ Rev. iv. 6—11.

In the interpretation of these mysterious symbols, to which I would devote the remainder of the present Lecture, expositors have been greatly divided. Instead, however, of entering upon an examination of the several opinions which have been entertained, I would, in the first instance, inquire whether some insight into their meaning may not be obtained from other parts of Scripture, and, in particular, from earlier visions of prophecy.

In the vision of Ezekiel already referred to, we find a description of "the likeness of four living creatures," closely resembling those which are described here. "This was their appearance," the prophet tells us; "they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings." And "as for the likeness of their faces,"—which are, in fact, the same as in the vision before us,—"they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle⁴." And they occupied, it would appear, the same position, in relation to the throne of the Divine glory, as these in the Apocalyptic vision. For when it is said here, that the four living creatures were "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne," or "in the circle of the throne," it would seem to convey the idea that they sustained and formed part of it; as in Ezekiel's vision, where we are told that the likeness of the four living creatures came out of the midst of the amber brightness, out of the midst of the fire⁵, "and the likeness of the firmament *upon the heads of the living creature* was as the colour of the terrible

⁴ Ezek. i. 5, 6. 10.

⁵ Ezek. i. 4, 5.

crystal, stretched forth *over their heads above*⁶.” “And *above the firmament that was over their heads* was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone⁷.” But, in a subsequent chapter, the prophet speaks of these living creatures as identical with the cherubim. “Then I looked,” he says, in the first verse of the tenth chapter, “and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of *the cherubims* there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.” He describes them again, as having the same four faces, and repeatedly calls them the cherubim⁸, and says of them expressly, “This is the living creature that I saw by the river of Chebar⁹ ;” and again, “This is the living creature which I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar ; and I knew that they were the cherubims . . . And the likeness of their faces was of the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves¹.”

The scene of this latter vision was the temple of Jerusalem, whither the prophet was carried by the Spirit from the land of his captivity. He beheld there “the glory of the God of Israel” in His temple, “according to the vision that” he “saw in the plain²,” after that which he had seen by the river of Chebar³. He beheld the glory of the God of Israel in His temple, first on the cherub, its wonted dwelling-place ; then “gone up from the cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house⁴ ;” then departing “from off the threshold of the house,” and standing over the cherubims ; “and

⁶ Ver. 22.⁷ Ver. 26.⁸ Ezek. x. 2—9, &c.⁹ Ver. 15.¹ Ver. 22.² Chap. viii. 4.³ Comp. ch. iii. 22, 23.⁴ Chap. ix. 3 ; x. 4.

the cherubims," he tells us, "lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight," and "stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above⁵." And then again, after further disclosures of the sins and offences which had made the Almighty thus to forsake His temple, and full declarations of His purposes of mingled mercy and judgment towards them, "then," we are told, "did the cherubims lift up their wings . . . and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city⁶." Thus did the visions vouchsafed to the captive prophet reveal to him the departure of the Divine Presence, for a time, from the temple which the Almighty had been pleased to make His chosen dwelling-place. Meanwhile, He had promised that, "although" He had "cast" His people "far off among the heathen, and although" He had "scattered them among the countries, yet" would He "be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they" should "come⁷." And hence the gracious, though mysterious, revelation of His Power and Providence, which would appear to be part, at least, of the import of that vision which was seen by the prophet when he was among the captives by the river of Chebar; and which, when compared with the other visions granted to him, seems fully to identify the living creatures described in St. John's vision of the heavenly temple with the cherubims which had formed the throne of the Divine Glory in the temple of Jerusalem.

⁵ Chap. x. 18, 19.⁶ Chap. xi. 22, 23.⁷ Ver. 16.

For that this was the mystic character and office of the cherubim, overshadowing with their wings the ark of the covenant, is evident not only from the visions of Ezekiel, but also from the place which the cherubim occupied in the inner sanctuary, “the most holy place” of the tabernacle and the temple; from the manner in which the cloud of glory, the symbol of the Divine Presence, is described as resting upon their outspread wings; and from the mention of the Almighty as “sitting upon the cherubim” (for so it should be rendered, as it is in the Prayer Book version of the Psalms, following the LXX. and Vulgate⁸), occurring in passages where His supreme dominion and sovereignty seems the prominent idea in the mind of the inspired writer. Thus, in the ninety-ninth Psalm, we read⁹,—“*The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble; he sitteth upon the cherubim, let the earth be moved;*” where, from the parallelism of the verse, the attribute of sitting upon the cherubim seems to answer to the idea of kingly dominion. And so again in the prayer of Hezekiah, when he “received the” insulting “letter” of the king of Assyria “from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, *that dwellest between the cherubims,*”—or rather, as has been already said, “*that sittest upon the cherubim,—thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth:* thou hast made heaven and earth¹.” And, in like manner, where we read, in the history, of the elders of Israel, when their

⁸ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῶν Χερουβὶμ, LXX. “qui sedet super Cherubim,” Vulg.

⁹ Ver. 1.

¹ Isai. xxxvii. 14—16. 2 Kings xix. 14, 15.

armies had been smitten before the Philistines, fetching "the ark of the covenant of the Lord" out of Shiloh into the camp, in order that when it came among them, it might deliver them out of the hand of their enemies, it is styled emphatically "the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts *which sitteth upon the cherubim*²." And again, afterwards, when David went to bring up the ark in triumph from its temporary resting-place, and fix it in its chosen seat, it is said in a still more emphatic manner, that "David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, *whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that sitteth upon the cherubim*³."

But there is a passage in the Book of Jeremiah which seems yet more plainly to show what was the mystic import of the ark with its overshadowing cherubim. The prophet has been declaring the gracious promise of the restoration of the repentant children of Israel and Judah from the land of their captivity. And thus his prophetic message proceeds. "And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more"—or, as it has been otherwise rendered, "neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem *the throne of the Lord*; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the

² 1 Sam. iv. 4, ("which dwelleth between the cherubims," E. V.)

³ 2 Sam. vi. 2. (E. V. ut sup.)

Lord, to Jerusalem ⁴.” It seems clearly implied in this passage, that “the ark of the covenant of the Lord” was, in earlier days, the symbol of that Divine throne which, when the type should give place to that which it foreshadowed, was to be exhibited on the wider scene of the true Jerusalem, His spiritual kingdom.

We have considered the cherubim hitherto exclusively as forming the *throne* of the God of Israel; but they are to be regarded also as His *chariot*. In the First Book of Chronicles, David speaks of “*the chariot of the cherubims*, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord ⁵.” And, in like manner, the son of Sirach says, “It was Ezekiel who saw the glorious vision, which was shewed him upon *the chariot of the cherubims* ⁶.” But the two ideas are, in fact, closely connected. “The cherubim,” says St. Isidore of Pelusium, “are *the throne and chariot* of God; they showed that He for whom the temple was built was not to be confined to place, nor to be expressed by figure or shape, but as a symbol of His kingdom were these placed. For since a temple is not regarded as such when it is crowned by no image, but the ruler and maker of these is above all created nature and human conception, he hath represented (or characterized) him

⁴ Jer. iii. 16, 17.

⁵ 1 Chron. xxviii. 18. See Whitley’s “Scheme and Completion of Prophecy,” p. 422. Dr. Whitley refers also to Philo, de Profugis, who “says, ‘that the Logos was the rider or charioteer of the cherubic powers’ — ἡνίοχον μὲν εἶναι τῶν δυνάμεων [Χερουβὶν] τὸν Λόγον. [Op. t. i. p. 561, ed.

Mangey.] Vid. Note, Appendix. And St. Jerome, ‘that Ezekiel had seen the Lord sitting upon the cherubim as upon a chariot,’ ‘Ezekielem Dominum vidisse [in Ezekiel Dominum cernit] in aurigæ modum sedentem super Cherubim.’—Hieron. in 12 Hoseæ.” [Op. t. iii. p. 1322.]

⁶ Ecclus. xlix. 8.

by the throne of the Lord and King of all⁷." Unlike the temples of the gods of the heathen, there was seen in the sanctuary of JEHOVAH no image of Deity: the wings of the cherubim formed, as it were, an empty throne⁸, of which the mercy seat, or cover of the ark, was the footstool, and on which when the Cloud of Glory rested, no one might stand within the most holy place. "Clouds and darkness," saith the Psalmist, "are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled⁹."

Thus is the King of Israel, the Lord of all the earth, described as going forth from His holy place, and from the highest heaven which that holy place typified, to the battle against His enemies, and for the deliverance of His chosen. "In my distress," saith the holy David, "I called unto the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hailstones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he shot out

⁷ Isid. Pelus. lib. iv. Epist. 73, quoted by Whitley, pp. 422, 423.

⁸ Comp. Heber's Bampton Lectures, p. 281.

⁹ Psal. xcvi. 2—4.

lightnings and discomfited them¹." And so again, in the sublime imagery of the prayer of Habakkuk, "thou didst *ride* upon thine horses and *thy chariots* of salvation. Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. . . . The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed. . . . Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, through the heap of great waters²." Thus magnificently are united, in the inspired hymns of Psalmists and Prophets, the images of the throne and the chariot of their God. "He was indeed," as has been well observed, "the immediate and proper King of Israel . . . and the cherubim on the ark was his throne. He was their Commander in war, and it was his triumphal chariot; he was their Judge at home, and it was his tribunal or judgment-seat³." These two ideas, of the judgment throne and the chariot, are remarkably combined in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, where the Ancient of days is seen taking His awful seat. "His *throne* was like the fiery flame, and his *wheels* as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth before him . . . the *judgment* was set and the books were opened⁴." And, in connexion with this description, we may recal to mind the "wheels" so minutely described, in their mysterious mechanism, in those visions of Ezekiel in which, as we have seen, "the chariot of

¹ Psal. xviii. 6. 9—14.

³ Whitley, pp. 423, 424.

² Habak. iii. 8, 9. 11—13.

⁴ Dan. vii. 9, 10.

the cherubims" was none other than the throne of the God of Israel⁵.

But to Ezekiel's later vision, in the temple of Jerusalem, I must again refer, as exhibiting another very striking point of resemblance between the cherubim there described and the living creatures in the vision of St. John; and one which may tend to throw further light upon the true import of these latter. After the description already referred to, of the appearance as of a sapphire stone, "as the appearance of the likeness of a throne," "in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims," the prophet continues—"And he," that is, He who sat on the throne, "spake unto the man clothed with linen"—that is, to the one who had appeared in the vision, with six others, each of them with a slaughter weapon in his hand, he with a writer's inkhorn by his side, commissioned to set a mark upon the foreheads of the faithful remnant⁶—"and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight. Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court. Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory. And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard, even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh. And it came to pass, that when he had commanded the man clothed

⁵ Ezek. i. 15—21; iii. 13; ⁶ Ezek. ix. 2.
x. 2, &c.; xi. 22.

with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims; then he went in, and stood beside the wheels. And *one cherub* stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that was between the cherubims, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen; who took it and went out. And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings⁷."

Let us now turn to the Book of Revelation. "And after that I looked," says St. John, in the fifteenth chapter, "and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And *one of the four living creatures* gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled⁸."

The resemblance between these two descriptions cannot fail to strike any one who compares them attentively together; and it would appear still closer, on a more minute examination of the two passages in the place which each occupies in the vision of which it forms part. I refer, however, here to these passages only for the light which they cast upon the import of the mystic symbols immediately before us. And I would call particular attention to two points which they seem to make clear: first, that the living

⁷ Chap. x. 2—8.

⁸ Rev. xv. 5—8.

creatures, or cherubim, are distinct from angels; and next, that the agencies of the two are combined together in a remarkable manner; the cherub, or living creature, putting the handful of fire, or the seven vials of wrath, into the hand of the seven angels clothed in linen, in St. John's vision, or of the man clothed in linen, in Ezekiel's.

The distinction between the "living creatures" and angelic beings seems still more clearly marked in the vision before us. In the fourth chapter of the Revelation we have the description of the four living creatures, offering their unceasing worship and service, "day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come;" with their ascription of "glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever," accompanied by the adoration of the four and twenty elders, who cast their crowns before the throne, and declare Him worthy to receive "the glory and the honour and the power," for that He hath created all things and for His pleasure they are and were created⁹. Having thus described the adoration offered to the Almighty Creator and Lord of all, the beloved disciple proceeds, in the next chapter, to speak of the book which he "saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne;" and which "no one¹ in heaven, nor on earth, neither under the earth, was found worthy to open, neither to look thereon," until "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof²." "And I beheld," says St. John, "and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the

⁹ Rev. iv. 8—11.

¹ οὐδεὶς.

² Chap. v. 1—5.

midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth³.” Thus do they, the living creatures and the elders, as they had before offered homage to their Creator, now give thanks to their Redeemer. And then follows the description of “the innumerable company of Angels,” now first appearing on the scene, to swell the tide of adoration and praise. “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of *many angels* round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing⁴.” The description may remind us of that which is given in Daniel’s vision, of the Angelic hosts surrounding the throne of “the Ancient of days;” “thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before

³ Vv. 6—10.⁴ Vv. 11—12.

him⁵." And so again, in the seventh chapter of the Revelation, it is said, "And all the angels stood round about the throne and the elders and the four living creatures⁶;" the hosts of angels forming thus, as it were, an outer circle, enclosing within it the seats of the four and twenty elders; and these again encircling the throne of God and the Lamb, and the four living creatures that were beneath and around it.

Thus, then, the living creatures, or Cherubim, are clearly distinguished, in the visions of Scripture, from the Angels who stand round the throne,—as in Micaiah's vision, where he said, "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left⁷,"—or from the Seraphim who, in Isaiah's vision, are represented as standing "above it⁸," hovering around and over it. The vision of Isaiah is the more closely applicable, because there also, as well as in the vision before us, the scene of the manifestation of the Divine Presence is in His temple. "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train"—literally, as in the marginal rendering, "the skirts thereof—filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory⁹." The description here given of the Seraphim, and the form of their ascription of praise, might seem, at first sight, to identify them with the living creatures of St.

⁵ Dan. vii. 10. cf. sup. pp. 85—87.

⁶ Rev. vii. 11.

⁷ 1 Kings xxii. 19.

⁸ Isa. vi. 2.

⁹ Vv. 1—3.

John's vision ; but the remarkable difference pointed out in their respective position relatively to the Divine throne, would lead us rather to regard them as beings of a distinct nature and order, who notwithstanding unite in one song with them ; in like manner as we confess in our *Te Deum*, "To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. *Heaven and earth* are full of the majesty of thy glory." And the distinction has been so far recognized, even in the commonly received opinion which would regard the Cherubim as beings of an Angelic nature, that they have been uniformly ranked as of inferior order to the Seraphim.

But the supposition that the living creatures described in this vision belong to any order of Angels, seems to be excluded by the character of the song in which they join, of thanksgiving for the blessings of redemption. It is true, indeed, that the song might be regarded as principally and specially the song of the four and twenty elders, with their harps of gold, and "golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of saints;" but it must be observed, at the same time, that the four living creatures are expressly mentioned as *leading* the song. "And when he had taken the book," says St. John, "*the four living creatures* and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb¹." And the song of the angels which followed is strikingly contrasted with this ; inasmuch as that song expresses the adoration of beings who beheld, indeed, with deep interest and holy wonder the mystery of redemption, themselves meanwhile owning no immediate personal share in its benefits.

¹ Chap. v. 8.

And when, still further, the song of the Angelic hosts was swelled by the mingled tide of the voices of the whole creation, the universal ascription of praise is represented as emphatically concluded by the response of the four living creatures, and the adoration of the four and twenty elders. “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. *And the four living creatures said, Amen.* And the four and twenty elders fell down, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever ².”

It would seem, then, that the living creatures, or Cherubim, in the visions of St. John, as in those of Ezekiel, are to be regarded as symbolizing beings, or powers, not of Angelic nature, but rather of that world which hath been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, as well as created, with all that is in it, for the glory of its Almighty Maker and Lord. But whatever rank they hold in His creation, thus much at least is clear,—that they are creatures of God, subject to His sovereign dominion, employed as the instruments of His will, and manifesting and setting forth His praise. And the manner in which they are here combined with Angels first, and then with the whole creation, would seem to identify them with those “hosts” of God, whom, together with His “angels” and all His creatures, the Psalmist calls upon to offer the tribute of praise to their Supreme Lord and King. “The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth

² Vv. 13, 14.

over all. Bless the Lord, ye his *angels*, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye *his hosts*; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord, *all his works* in all places of his dominion³." If, as it would appear, in this passage, the "hosts" of the Lord are not to be regarded as simply identical with His "angels," both being alike, yet in different ways, the servants and ministers of His will, we could not find a description which would correspond more exactly with the Psalmist's language than that which is supplied by the visions of Ezekiel and St. John, of the combined agency of the angels and living creatures, the one strong to fulfil the commandment given them by the Almighty Voice, the other effectual, though inferior, ministers of His, employed to "do his pleasure."

It will, perhaps, have been observed, in the passages already cited respecting the ark of God and His throne upon the cherubim, how closely connected with them is the title of "the Lord of hosts." It is a title which seems to be specially appropriated to the *regal* character of the God of Israel. We find the prophets speaking of "the *King* whose name is the Lord of hosts⁴;" and of His kingdom as specially exalted over the powers of *this world*. Thus we read in Isaiah, "Thy Maker is thine husband; *the Lord of hosts is his name*; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; *The God of the whole earth* shall he be called⁵." And if the limits of our present inquiry would allow us, we might largely illustrate this point, by tracing the origin, and the gradually increasing employment of the title, as the disclosures of Pro-

³ Psal. ciii. 20—22.

li. 57. Comp. Isa. vi. 5.

⁴ Jer. xlvi. 18; xlviii. 15;

⁵ Isa. liv. 5.

phesy, and the events of the sacred history, revealed more and more fully the supreme power and dominion of the God of Israel, "ruling in the kingdoms of men," giving to His people strength and victory in the battle, or wielding the empires of the world for their chastisement, and then, when that purpose was accomplished, restraining or bringing to destruction these mighty instruments of His controlling Providence.

It was by the agency of one of these powers of the world that that vengeance was accomplished on the guilty city of Jerusalem, which Ezekiel's vision describes; the Babylonian conqueror being made the instrument in the hand of the Almighty for the punishment of His people and the nations generally of the Eastern world. "For, lo, I will send and take all the families of the north," said the Lord by His prophet Jeremiah, "and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, *my servant*, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about ⁶." And it is worthy of remark, that by an ancient writer⁷ the cherubic symbols are interpreted as having been combined in the strange history of that mighty king, to whom, as the prophet Daniel reminded his proud and impious successor, "the most high God gave a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour;" so that "for the majesty that he gave him all people, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him ⁸." For, in the imagery of Daniel's vision, he was the lion with eagle's wings, which the prophet "beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it

⁶ Jer. xxv. 9.

⁷ Vid. Quæstiones et Responsiones ad Orthodoxos. Ap-

pend. Op. Justini Mart. (ed. Bened.) p. 458.

⁸ Dan. v. 18, 19.

was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it⁹." "But when his heart was lifted up," to resume the words of the prophet to Belshazzar, "and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts . . . they fed him with grass like oxen¹ . . . till he knew that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will²." Without restricting to this single, though striking, instance in the first of the four great monarchies, the application of symbols which, from their fourfold number, would appear rather, from the general use of Scripture language, (as has been already observed,) to convey the idea of *universality*, the general import of the symbols of the cherubim would seem to be that which is reflected in the confession of the king of Babylon, when the appointed time of his degradation was accomplished. "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants: and none can stay his hand,

⁹ Dan. vii. 4.

¹ Comp. chap. iv. 33, "till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like bird's claws."—λέγει δὲ . . . ὅτι ηὐξήθησαν οἱ ὄνυχες αὐτοῦ ὡς ἀετοῦ,

καὶ αἱ τρίχες αὐτοῦ ὡς λέοντος, καὶ χόρτον ἐψώμισαν αὐτὸν ὡς τὸν μύσχον, καὶ καρδία ἀνθρώπου ἐδόθη αὐτῷ.—Quæst. et Respons. loc. sup. cit.

² Chap. v. 20, 21.

or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase³.”

There is yet one description in the book of Ezekiel which must be referred to as remarkably parallel, and as tending strongly to confirm the same conclusion; inasmuch as it identifies still more definitely one of the princes and potentates of earth, not only with the imagery but also with the very name of the cherubim, or living creatures, as described in the visions of the same prophet, and of St. John. The passage referred to occurs in the prophecy against “the prince of Tyrus.” Upon him, too, the sentence of the Most High had been pronounced:—“Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas . . . Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness⁴.” . . . “Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in

³ Chap. iv. 34—37.

⁴ Ezek. xxviii. 2, 6, 7.

beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering . . . Thou art the anointed," or, as it may be rendered, "the extended cherub that covereth"⁵; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire."—The description may remind us of that given in the prophet's vision by the river Chebar. "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps; it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning"⁶.—"Thou wast perfect in thy ways," the prophecy against the king of Tyre proceeds, "from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the holy mountain of God; and I will destroy thee, *O covering cherub*, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: . . . therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee⁷." The direct application of the *term* "cherub," in this passage, to a potentate of the same order and rank with that which had, elsewhere,

אֶת־כְּרוּב מִמֶּשֶׁחַ הַסּוּכָה⁵
 "Tu Cherub extentus et protegens." Vulg.

⁵ Chap. i. 13, 14.

⁷ Chap. xxviii. 11—18.

seemed to be described by the *acts* of the cherub, as represented in mystic imagery, may be considered, I think, no slight confirmation of the interpretation which would refer these mysterious emblems to the various forms of earthly dominion. With regard to the term itself, which is involved in some obscurity, we may observe that, amidst much diversity of opinion as to its derivation and import, there is considerable evidence in favour of the interpretation which would connect it with the idea of 'power,' 'greatness,' or 'dominion⁸.' And it is observable, that the Chaldee paraphrase thus renders the words in which, in the passage just quoted from the prophet Ezekiel, the prince of Tyre is addressed as the anointed "cherub;"—"Thou art a king anointed to a kingdom, and I gave thee greatness⁹."

It may be added, in further corroboration of the same conclusion, that, while angels are never represented in Scripture except with the attributes of humanity refined and exalted, the kingdoms of this world are constantly symbolized by forms like those which predominate among the cherubic symbols. It may be sufficient to recal to mind Daniel's vision of the four beasts, which is the rather to be referred to for our present purpose, inasmuch as, there, the symbols of earthly empire are introduced in immediate connexion with the throne of the Ancient of days and of the Son of Man¹. Imagery of this kind abounds in the prophets. In Ezekiel alone, for instance, we find the princes of Israel compared to young lions²; the kings of Babylon and Egypt

⁸ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁹ אֶת־מֶלֶךְ מְרַבָּא לְמַלְכוּ

וַיְהִיבֵית לָךְ רְבוּתָא

¹ Cf. sup. p. 85—"his *throne* was like the fiery flame, and his *wheels* as burning fire."—Dan. vii. 9.

² Ezek. xix. 1—9.

described as “great eagles, with great wings, long-winged, full of feathers which had divers colours³ ;” and generally, “the mighty” and “the princes of the earth” designated as “bullocks,” “fatlings of Bashan⁴.” And in the sixty-eighth Psalm we find this supplication addressed to “him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens that were of old.” “Rebuke the wild beast of the reed⁵,”—for so, perhaps, may the original⁶ most literally be rendered, describing, it would seem, the crocodile or the lion,—“the multitude of the *bulls*, with the *calves of the nations*, till every one submit themselves with pieces of silver; scatter thou the people that delight in war. *Princes* shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord⁷.”

With regard to the *number* of the mystic symbols which we have seen reason thus to interpret of these “kingdoms of the earth,” I have already observed, that the number four is commonly used in the Hebrew to denote completeness and universality. And this idea may be traced in the interpretations, in other respects widely differing, which have been adopted both by Jewish and by Christian expositors. Vitringa, on the authority of Abarbanel, enumerates three distinct Rabbinical interpretations, which may be regarded as all agreeing in one common idea—namely, the universal extent of God’s power and dominion; though, in one of them, reference is made to the four orders of the heavenly hierarchy,

³ Chap. xvii. 3. Comp. v. 7. “feras arundinis.” Vulg.

⁴ Chap. xxxix. 18.

⁶ Heb. חַיֵּית קָנֶה

⁵ E. V. marginal rendering, “the beasts of the reeds.”—

⁷ Psal. lxviii. 30—32.

under the four Archangels, to whom the government of the world is, according to Jewish opinions, supposed to be committed⁸; in another, to the four elements of which the material universe is composed⁹; in another, to the four great empires of the ancient world, or rather, the celestial spirits by which those empires and their rulers were influenced and governed¹. The same may be observed of the interpretations given by Christian expositors; and, in particular, of that which was adopted generally by the early Fathers, applying the four symbols to the four Gospels, as the pillars of Christ's throne, the varied manifestation of His Divinity and Incarnation to the whole world².

How far this or other interpretations may be combined, as mystical and secondary *applications*,—for as such they may rather be regarded,—with that which I have endeavoured to establish, on evidence derived from Scripture itself, as what would appear to be a *primary meaning* of the symbols before us—is a question which cannot at present be entered upon. The subject may more conveniently be considered, or at all events alluded to, when we proceed to the actual unfolding of the Apocalyptic vision in the opening of the first four

⁸ R. Eliezer, and the ancient tradition.

⁹ Maimonides.

¹ Kimchi. Vitringa, *Observ. Sacræ*, lib. iii. pp. 837—840.

² See Williams' "Thoughts on the Study of the Holy Gospels," Part i. "St. Irenæus and St. Augustin both suggest that the number of the four Gospels is on account of the four quarters of the globe. . . . And perhaps this number is so

applied as signifying universality or completeness; so that, as the wings of the Cherubim filled the temple and touched its walls, so the Gospels may be said to fill and touch the walls of the Universe. . . . St. Irenæus speaks of them, thus applied to the Evangelists, as the four pillars upon which the Church rests, which is spread throughout the four quarters of the world."—pp. 6, 7.

seals, each of which, severally, one of the four living creatures bids the beloved disciple “come and see³.” Whether, again, the four symbols may be individually applied to so many distinct kingdoms, or powers, of the ancient world, and whether such application may not help to remove some difficulties in the several descriptions given of them in different parts of Scripture, are points which may then, perhaps, briefly be noticed. For the present, it may be sufficient to state the general conclusion to which we have come, that these symbols represent the universal, all-pervading agency of God’s overruling Providence, and the subjection to His supreme dominion of “all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come⁴.”

For there is, doubtless, a sense in which these symbols of earthly power, if such indeed they be, may be regarded as, in some sort, representing at the same time “principalities and powers” of the world unseen. We have observed, on a former occasion⁵, how, in the book of Daniel, the Angel who appeared to the prophet had been exerting spiritual influences with the princes of the Eastern world; standing up, in the first days of Darius the Mede, “to confirm and to strengthen him;” then entering into conflict with “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” for one and twenty days,—a conflict which was to be renewed again; for “now,” said he, “will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia

³ Rev. vi. 1, 3, 5, 7.

⁴ Eph. i. 21.

⁵ Vid. sup. pp. 101, 102, 125.

shall come⁶.” And the apostle St. Paul, in like manner, closely connects “the course of this world” with “the Prince of the power of the air⁷,” and joins together “principalities and powers,” the “rulers of the darkness of *this world*⁸,” and “spiritual wickedness⁹ in *high*¹ *places*².” And thus the idea which we commonly associate with the name of Cherubim may be combined with that which, if the foregoing argument be well founded, more visibly and palpably belongs to it; and the language of that sublime hymn of the Church, the opening of which, it has been well remarked, seems to have been formed principally upon the vision before us, may, on this view, be found to agree still more perfectly with the inspired description. “We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.” “For all the gods of the nations” were but “idols;” there is one “throne set in heaven,” and “there is none beside thee.” “All the earth doth worship thee; the Father everlasting;” the powers of earth owning Thy dominion, and paying their homage to Thee, the Everlasting, the One “Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and art to come.” “To thee all Angels cry aloud; the heavens and all the powers therein.” For, in the vision of the things in heaven, it was seen how “all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures,” and their voice was heard, swelling the song of praise. And thus “To thee *Cherubin* AND *Seraphin* continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of

⁶ Dan. xi. 1; x. 13, 20.

⁷ Eph. ii. 2.

⁸ τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου.

⁹ “Or, *wicked spirits*,”

Marg. E. V. τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας.

¹ “Or, *heavenly*,” Marg. E. V. ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.

² Eph. vi. 12.

Sabaoth.” For the prophet heard the song in the elder temple of Jerusalem from the lips of the Seraphim, and the apostle heard it in the new and heavenly temple from the living creatures, the Cherubim—“Heaven and earth”—not “the whole earth” only, as the prophet heard³, but heaven also, heaven now opened as it never was before—“Heaven *and* earth are full of the majesty of thy glory.”

The Apocalyptic vision, I had occasion to observe at the beginning of the present Lecture, bears upon it the character of a winding up, and gathering into one, of all that had gone before of God’s marvellous and manifold revelations. And not least remarkably is this the case in regard to our immediate subject. The mysterious symbols which we have been contemplating carry us back, not only through the times of the elder dispensation, the glories of the temple and of the still earlier tabernacle; but, yet further, to the very time of man’s fall, when that scheme of redemption was first darkly revealed, the completion and full manifestation of which formed the theme of praise in the great consummation. “Cherubim” are mentioned in the same chapter of the book of Genesis which records the triumph of the tempter, the promise of Him who should finally bruise his head, the judgment which expelled man from Paradise, and the mercy which reserved for him the hope of a return thither. “So he drove out the man,” we read, “and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life⁴.” A long period was to elapse;

³ Isa. vi. 3.

⁴ Gen. iii. 24.

the powers of the world, the dominion of the Evil One, were to oppose the Church of God; mighty kingdoms were to arise, and rule for an appointed time, until the kingdom of God and of his Christ should come. And then the promise came which was the removal, as it were, of that opposing power, which had been for a time Divinely appointed,—the promise given in the first of the epistles to the seven Churches, recorded in the book of the Revelation. “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God⁵.”

Meanwhile, through the long vista of years, there was vouchsafed a gradual increase of light. It may have been, as some have supposed, that above the Cherubim, eastward of the garden of Eden, the Divine Presence was manifested, and that there our first fathers worshipped; but, at all events, no intimation to that effect is given us in the inspired record. In the tabernacle and in the temple it was the privilege of Faith to contemplate the Almighty King as enthroned above the Cherubim, though it were amid the thick darkness which none might penetrate. In the vision of Ezekiel, when now the symbol was to give place to the reality which it represented,—for the ark and cherubim were never to be set up again,—above the living creatures, whose mighty and fearful agency was so vividly exhibited, was seen the likeness of a throne and of One that sat upon it. In the vision of the Apocalypse, when the “door was opened in heaven,” and the beloved disciple was bidden to “come up” thither, he beheld immediately “a throne set in

⁵ Rev. ii. 7.

heaven and one sat upon it." And the thrones of His elders, His kings and priests, were seen next; and then, forming part of His throne and lying beneath it, were the well-known symbols of might and majesty, subdued to His sovereign dominion, and proclaiming His eternal praise. Of a truth, this was the final Revelation of Him "who is the faithful Witness, and the Prince of the kings of the earth," the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the First and the Last⁶."

⁶ Rev. i. 5, 8, 11.

LECTURE VII.¹

REV. vi. 1, 2.

“ And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse : and he that sat on him had a bow ; and a crown was given unto him : and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”

IN inquiring, on a former occasion, into the import of those mysterious emblems, the four living creatures, which St. John, admitted into the visions of heaven, beheld “in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne,” of the Divine glory, we were engaged but with the scenery of the heavenly temple, the description of which is, as it were, preparatory to the unfolding of the prophetic visions themselves. The opening of those prophetic scenes is in the chapter before us. In the preceding chapter St. John had told us, that he “saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals ;”—a book which none “in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, was able to open, neither to look thereon,” until “the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David,” “prevailed to open the book, and to loose

¹ Preached Nov. 26, 1843.

the seven seals thereof.” “And I beheld,” says St. John, “and, lo, in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders,”—the four and twenty elders whose thrones encircled the throne of the Uncreated Majesty,—“stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth².”

It will be recollected that to the prophet Daniel, in the days of elder revelation, it had been said, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end;” “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end³.” But now the Great Prophet had appeared in the midst of His Church; and “the mystery which” had “been hid from ages and generations,” was henceforth more and more fully to be “made manifest to his saints⁴;”—even that great “mystery which from the beginning of the world” had “been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto the princi-

² Rev. v. 6—10.³ Dan. xii. 4. 9.⁴ Col. i. 26.

palities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord⁵.” To Him it was given to unfold before His Church all the mysterious roll of prophecy, and to loose its seals in order: and it is the opening of the first of the seven which is described in the words before us. “And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four living creatures saying, Come and see.”

It will be observed that, at the opening of each of the first four seals, the attention of St. John is called to the unfolding vision by the voice of one of the four living creatures, one after another calling him thus to “Come and see.” It would appear from this, as if these four seals formed, in some sense, a whole; something, we may suppose, embracing, in a manner, the whole circuit of the dominion and operation of God’s universal Providence in this lower world. I had occasion before to observe, in reference to the fourfold symbols which St. John beheld encircling and supporting the Divine throne, that the number four is commonly used in Scripture language to denote *universality*; and if those symbols, in their relation to the throne which was above them, have been rightly interpreted as denoting the subjection to the supreme authority of the Most High, of “all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come⁶,” we might imagine that events, the unfolding of which the four living creatures in order bid the evangelic prophet

⁵ Eph. iii. 9—11.

⁶ Eph. i. 21.

draw nigh and see, would be such as concerned the whole world of God's Providence, affecting in turn every corner of the earthly dominion which is under His footstool. And this idea derives some confirmation from finding, in the fourth seal, mention made of "the *fourth* part of *the earth*"⁷ as the scene of operation allotted to the agents of destruction which are there commissioned. But more clearly still does the character of *completeness* seem to belong to these first four seals taken together, when we observe how, after the revelation, in the fifth seal, of the assemblage of the souls of the martyrs who had been slain, as it would appear, by those sundry kinds of death which are described in the fourth seal, there follows, in the sixth seal, a great consummation, winding up the destinies of the whole earth.

But to proceed to the more particular examination of the four seals themselves, which, we may at least infer from what has been said, must be taken in a connected view. The vision which St. John beheld, when those seals were opened in succession, and the four living creatures in order bade him "Come and see," were four horses with their riders, going forth in the earth. Under the first seal he says, "I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Under the second seal, "there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Under the third he says, "I beheld,

⁷ Rev. vi. 8.

and lo a black horse ; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny ; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Under the fourth seal, "I looked, and behold a pale horse : and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth ⁸."

The imagery here employed is remarkably parallel with that of the opening vision of the prophet Zechariah. "I saw by night," saith the prophet, "and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom ; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these ? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth ⁹." They were the ministers of God's overruling Providence, sent forth over the earth ; their colours depicting the influence of each power, thus employed, on the destinies of God's Church and people. "The red horses, which lead the array," as an able and judicious commentator observes, "portend war and slaughter ; such as had occasioned the captivity. The white horses concluding the procession, denote, as the context shows, the peace and happiness which were to succeed. The speckled, or party-coloured

⁸ Chap. vi. 1—8.

⁹ Zech. i. 8—10.

horses, express the intermediate transition from suffering to happiness ¹."

This appears yet more clearly from another vision of the same prophet. I "looked," he says, "and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country. And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro in the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he unto me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country ²." They were the agents of God's Providence throughout the world; and the scene of action on which those who were foremost in the prophet's view were employed, was "the north country," that is, Babylon, where the chosen people had been in bondage, but were now to find their sorrow succeeded by joy; the black horses denoting their former affliction, the white, which went forth after them, representing the deliverance which the cap-

¹ Woodhouse, Annotations on the Apocalypse, p. 122.

² Zech. vi. 1—8.

tives were to obtain through the victories of Cyrus³.

“From this application of the imagery of horses in Scripture,” as Dean Woodhouse further observes, “it may appear, that a man on horseback, in scriptural vision, represents the going forth of some power divinely commissioned to effect changes upon earth : and that the character of the change is to be collected from the colour of the horse ; the red, or flame-coloured⁴, denoting war and slaughter ; the black, mourning and woe ; the white, victory, and peace, and happiness.” And the interpretation thus derived from the visions of the earlier prophet, considered simply with reference to the events in which they were undoubtedly fulfilled, is strongly confirmed by the imagery in the passage before us. For here, the white horse has a rider marked by the undoubted symbols of victory and triumph—the bow and the crown and the career of conquest ; the red, the fiery-coloured, horse has his rider distinguished, in like manner, as the representative of war, both by the commission given to him, that he should take peace from the earth, and by the sword which was put into his hand ; while the black horse, whose rider would seem to be the emblem of famine, when bread is eaten by weight, and the oil and wine are precious, is still, as in Zechariah's vision, the appropriate symbol of distress and calamity.

But to proceed to the more particular examination of the several symbols : and first, of the white horse and him that sat thereon. And here, acting on that most safe and sure rule of interpretation

³ See Woodhouse, loc. sup. cit.

⁴ *Ἰσφρόος*.

which would look to prophetic Scripture, and especially to other parts of the same volume of prophecy, as the best exponent of its own imagery, we cannot fail to be struck with the similarity of a description which we find in the nineteenth chapter of this same book of the Revelation. "I saw heaven opened," says St. John, "and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS⁵." It cannot for a moment be doubted to Whom this description belongs. It is He whom the beloved disciple beheld, in his first vision, in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,—His universal Church; whose "eyes were as a flame of fire," "and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword⁶." He is seen here with the "many crowns" on His head, the regal crowns⁷ of the kingdoms of this world which have been subdued to His power. He comes forth with the signs of vengeance to be fulfilled on His enemies, like him whom the prophet Isaiah beheld

⁵ Rev. xix. 11—16.⁶ Chap. i. 14. 16.⁷ διαδήματα.

coming “from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah,” “glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength;” who had trodden the wine-press alone, and would tread the people in His anger and trample them in His fury; for the day of vengeance was in His heart, and the year of His redeemed was come⁸;—it is the same Divine and glorious Person who is seen in the vision of St. John, manifested in all the majesty and glory of His presence, and leading His Church to victory. And if, in the earlier vision immediately before us, He appears with less manifest signs of His Divine nature and His Almighty power, it is because here the time is not yet come for the full display of His might and majesty. He has a bow, ready strung for the conflict with His enemies, whom afterward, in nearer combat, He must slay with the sword: and there is given unto Him a crown, the crown not of the king but of the combatant⁹, the crown of promised victory. And He goes forth “conquering, and to conquer:” still greater and more extended triumphs are in store for Him whose first going forth was thus with the signs, and the assured pledge, of final success. The description given in the passage before us, as well as in that later vision, corresponds with the imagery of the Psalm which, on the inspired authority of the Apostle¹, we cannot doubt has reference to Christ Himself. “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. *Thine arrows are sharp* in the

⁸ Isa. lxiii. 1. 3, 4.

⁹ στέφανος.

¹ Heb. i. 8.

heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee ²."

It would appear, then, from the comparison of prophetic language in passages apparently parallel, that under the imagery of this first seal is described "the progress of the Christian religion in its primitive purity," when its first teachers were sent out into all the world, in the might of the Divine Spirit, and with their Master's presence pledged to be with them; His Gospel going forth thus with the bow and the crown,—with "the Divine favour resting upon it, armed spiritually against its foes, and destined to be victorious in the end ³." And when it is said of the emblematic Warrior that "he went forth conquering, and to conquer," we may understand, as has been well pointed out, a reference to the two distinct periods in the progress of the Christian Religion; the first when, "preached in purity by the Apostles," it "overcame the powers of darkness, and all human opposition, and, establishing itself in the world, 'went forth conquering;'" "the second, when, after a long warfare, during which this holy religion is corrupted, debased, and deformed, by the machinations of the enemy, it is at length seen to regain its primitive freedom and purity, and to overcome all opposition." "The latter period, which," on this view, is represented in the later vision already referred to, is "only alluded to in the passage now before us; the prime object of which is to show the religion of Christ going forth in its original purity, and in the power divinely conferred upon it ⁴." Imagery, it may be observed, of a similar

² Psal. xlv. 3—5. Vitringa 244—246.
refers to this Psalm, and to
Zech. i. 8, &c. Anacrisis, pp.

³ Woodhouse, Annot. p. 124.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 124, 125.

kind is found in a passage of the prophet Zechariah, where it is said, "The Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle. Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together. And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded⁵."

And this interpretation of the first seal comes commended to us by the authority of the ancient commentators generally, and of some of the most distinguished amongst the moderns. And of those of the moderns who have applied the three following seals to the succession of Roman Emperors, the originator of that interpretation, the learned Joseph Mede, saw plainly that the first seal could not be so understood⁶. And, indeed, whatever interpretation we might be disposed to adopt of the symbols exhibited in those three following seals, the opening vision of Zechariah, already referred to, would lead us specially to recognize something of a Divine character in the Leader and Chieftain (if so He may be regarded) of the mysterious agents that are here seen going forth. He whom the prophet describes as the "man riding upon a red horse⁷," followed by red horses, speckled and white, is immediately afterwards spoken of as "the Angel of the Lord⁸;"—a title which, in the Old Testament, is constantly employed to designate one higher than any

⁵ Zech. x. 3—5.

⁶ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁷ Zech. i. 8.

⁸ Ver. 11. "And they an-

swered the Angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees." Comp. vv. 8, 9.

created Angel—even the Angel, the Messenger, of the everlasting covenant⁹. St. Jerome, in his commentary on this passage of the prophet, following herein those whom he calls “the masters of the Churches,” observes, that the man riding on the red horse is the Lord the Saviour. He refers to the description in Isaiah, already quoted, of that mysterious One who is “red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat;” and proceeds to identify the rider on the red horse described in Zechariah’s vision with the rider on the white horse in the Revelation of St. John¹.

But from the consideration of this first seal, the interpretation of which it is peculiarly important to determine rightly, we may proceed to examine more briefly the import of the other three. These may perhaps be regarded as merely symbolic representations;—the second, of war; the third, of famine; the fourth, of those “four sore judgments” joined in one as instruments of death and destruction, “the sword and the famine and the noisome beast and the pestilence².” And if this interpretation be adopted, we may perhaps most fitly apply these descriptions to the events which our Lord foretold in His solemn prophecy delivered on the Mount of Olives. “Ye shall hear of *wars* and rumours of wars. . . . For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be *famines*, and *pestilences*, and earthquakes, in divers places.

⁹ Mal. iii. 1.

¹ “Vir autem qui ascendebat super equum rufum Dominus Salvator est, qui dispensationem nostræ carnis assumens, audit in Isaia: ‘Quare rubra sunt vestimenta tua?’ Hic qui nunc captivo populo

rufus ostenditur, in Apocalypsi Johannis in candidis vestibus et in candido equo sedere describitur.”—Hieron. *in loc.* t. iii. p. 1711.

² Ezek. xiv. 21. Comp. chap. v. 17; xxxiii. 27.

All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake³." These signs might seem to be delineated in these seals, in like manner as the first seal would appear to correspond with that universal preaching of His Gospel which our Lord declares should meanwhile take place—"this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come⁴."

We may, however, observe, with more particular reference to the second seal, that there are other declarations of our Blessed Lord, which would seem, perhaps, more exactly to answer to the language here employed. To the rider on the red, the fiery-coloured, horse "it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." In language strikingly similar our Lord had said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a *sword*⁵." Or, as we read in another Gospel, "I am come to send *fire* on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division⁶." "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household⁷." "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and

³ Matt. xxiv. 6—9.

⁴ Ver. 14.

⁵ Matt. x. 34. Cf. *Œcumenii et Arethæ Comment. in Apo-*

calyps. ed. Cramer. (in Catenis) Oxon. 1840.

⁶ Luke xii. 49—51.

⁷ Matt. x. 35, 36.

the father the child : and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death ⁸." This, it has been well observed, is the true force of the words, "that they should kill one another;"—the strife and contention, "not of nation against nation," such as has continually been waged throughout the world's history, "but of brethren and companions among themselves ⁹." And the appearing, in the vision, of the red horse and his rider, immediately following the going forth of the first, would seem to have a peculiar significance, if it denoted the strife and contention which, though not the legitimate, was, in some sense, the natural,—as it was assuredly the Divinely predicted—consequence of the coming, into the world, of the Gospel of peace.

In the interpretation of the third seal, some difficulty arises from the doubt as to the proper translation of the word which describes that which the rider on the black horse is represented as holding in his hand. It has been questioned whether the word which our translators have rendered "a pair of balances ¹," would, taken by itself, bear that meaning. The use of the word, however, in that sense, seems to be vindicated by the remainder of the description in which it occurs. And the balances in the hand of the rider, combined with the proclamation by the voice from the midst of the four living creatures, declaring the price of "a measure of wheat" and "three measures of barley"—a price indicating, as, I think, would clearly appear, a great degree of scarcity ²—and, together with this proclamation, the

⁸ Ibid. ver. 21.

⁹ Woodhouse's Annot. p. 127.

¹ ζυγός, the *yoke* of the

balance.

² See Woodhouse, Translation, and Annot.

strict charge, given by the same voice, for the preservation of “the oil and the wine,” would significantly express a state of things in which, as in the straitness of the siege which the prophet foretold to Jerusalem, they should “eat bread by weight and with care³,” and in which the fruits of the earth, though still preserved by a guardian power, should be the objects of watchful solicitude. And when we bear in mind the language in which, elsewhere, the prophet Amos speaks of the days when there should be “a famine” in the land, “not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord⁴,” and when we remember also how, in Scripture phrase, the corn and the oil and the wine are used to denote spiritual blessings⁵, it will seem, perhaps, most accordant with the interpretation which has been given, on Scriptural grounds, to the two preceding seals, if we understand this also to describe a state of spiritual privation, the punishment, as it would seem, of abuse or neglect of the gifts of God’s grace. It would foretel a time when those gifts, though preserved in the midst of the earth by the special care of His overruling Providence, should be given in scanty measure to preserve life; while the gladness and joy of plenty were taken away, and a gloomy blackness gave its appropriate colour to the darkening scene.

In the fourth seal we have imagery yet more appalling. The hue of the “pale” horse, livid and ghastly,—for such is the force of the epithet here employed⁶—his rider whose name was Death, and Hell following after him, and the power given them

³ Ezek. iv. 16.

⁴ Amos viii. 11. See Woodhouse.

⁵ *E. g.* Amos ix. 13. Joel

iii. 18. Jer. xxxi. 12.

⁶ χλωρός.

to “kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth,” seem to open to our view the “dark places of the earth,” “full of the habitations of cruelty.” “There is a sublime climax, or scale of terrific imagery,” says Dean Woodhouse, “exhibited in the colours of the horses of the first four seals, denoting, as I understand them, the progressive character of the Christian times, from its pure beginning to its greatest corruption. It begins with *pure white*; then changes to *fiery and vengeful*; then to *black* or *mournful*; and when we suppose that nothing more dreadful in colour can appear, then comes another gradation still more terrific, even this *deadly pale*’.”

“The period of the fourth seal is” evidently one “of great slaughter and devastation. But,” as the same writer further remarks, “in the metaphorical language of Scripture, these agents of destruction are not confined to act upon the lives of men only . . . and it is the most dire work of Death and Hell to destroy in the heart of man those seeds of religion which are there planted to grow up unto *eternal life*.” “Conformably to these images,” according to this view, “Death and Hell, under this seal, are described as making ravage not only on the natural lives, but” also “on the spiritual lives of men, by eradicating the vital principle of pure religion. The Christian religion, which had begun her benign progress in white array, and under the guidance of apostolic teachers, is now not only so changed in colour and appearance, as to be scarcely discernible as the same; but is under the direction of *deadly* and *infernal* agents, who delight to destroy in her all that remains

⁷ Annot. p. 139.

of primitive purity⁸." And, it may be added, that in the same degree in which the powers of evil, whether of this world or of the world unseen, were suffered to prevail over the living power of the Word of Life, and the spiritual life of men, they would also exhibit the outward violence by which that persecuting empire was distinguished, which seemed to early times the very type of the Antichristian power, and which, in inventing, as Lactantius speaks, new and unwonted tortures for the worshippers of God, slew them "with sword, and with hunger, and with the beasts of the earth⁹."

It may be observed, in favour of this general view of the four seals, as delineating the various fortunes of the Christian Church, and the changes which it has seemed to undergo in the different stages of its progress, that there is a unity of subject thus preserved throughout; from the first going forth of the Divine Religion in its original purity and power, to its re-appearance, in power and purity still more resplendent and glorious, for the final victory over all its foes. But if it should rather seem, that the images exhibited in the three latter seals are to be interpreted literally, as describing the outward calamities of war, and famine, and the varied forms of death which follow in their desolating train, we must undoubtedly, I think, with the ancient expositors, identify the scenes here described with those which our Lord foretold in the prophecy already referred to. These events will then still maintain a close connexion with that which I have endeavoured to establish as the import of the *first* seal, *viz.* the going forth of the "Gospel of the kingdom," which

⁸ Ibid. p. 140.

⁹ Whitley, p. 235.

was to be “preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.” This, with the “signs following” it, and the attendant circumstances which marked its progress over the earth,—whether we give to the scenes in which it is depicted a more literal or a more spiritual interpretation, a wider or a more limited extent in point of time,—is undoubtedly, I conceive, the main subject of these first disclosures of the mystic book. And if, taking in the remoter view, we discover in them glimpses of later periods in the Church’s history, these must, I think, be regarded only as opened (so to speak) in perspective, as we follow the first career of the Gospel over the face of the earth. It was the commission of our Lord to His Apostles, the chosen heralds of His word, “Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” “And,” we are told, “they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them.” “Their sound went out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.” “The word of the truth of the Gospel” “is come unto you,” said the Apostle of the Gentiles, writing to the Christians at Colossæ, “as it is in all the world;” “that Gospel,” he says again, “which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven¹.” And it is this its universality, in regard to the whole extent of God’s earthly dominion, that would seem to be prominently set before us, in the fourfold imagery which answers, as we have seen, to the four living creatures who were beheld “in the midst of the throne and round about the throne” of the Almighty King.

In examining, on a former occasion, into the

¹ Mark xvi. 15. 20. Rom. x. 18. Col. i. 5, 6. 23.

mystic import of those four emblems, thus closely connected with the first four seals, I deferred the consideration of the question, whether they admitted, severally, of a distinct application to so many different kingdoms, or whether they were simply to be regarded, as denoting, generally, the subjection of all “principality and power and might and dominion” to the supreme authority of Him who ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and maketh them the instruments of His Sovereign will.

In those visions of Zechariah, already referred to, of which the imagery, as we have seen, strikingly resembles that of the passage before us, the horses and chariots which are there described as those “whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth,”—“the four spirits of the heavens which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth,”—are represented as taking possession, as it were, of different lands; some going forth “into the north country,” and some “toward the south country,” and some, as though their fixed place of dominion were not yet assigned to them, bidden to “walk to and fro through the earth.” And in these horses and chariots, both Jewish and Christian interpreters have traced, in connexion with a description of angelic agency in the fulfilment of the designs of God’s Providence, a reference also to the four great monarchies delineated in the visions of the book of Daniel. Of the two visions of Zechariah, the latter, that of the four chariots, seems the rather to connect itself with the vision before us, inasmuch as it is followed immediately by a remarkable prophecy of Him for whose spiritual and everlasting kingdom those earthly empires were destined to prepare the way. The prophet was commanded to take silver and gold,

and make of them crowns to set symbolically upon the head of the high priest; the promise being at the same time solemnly given of "the Man whose name is the BRANCH," who should "build the temple of the Lord," and should "bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne, and be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace be between them both²."

The symbols of the four living creatures, with which, as we have already seen, the four seals in the vision before us are closely connected, we found reason to think, on examining them by the light of prophetic Scripture, were intended to denote the kingdoms of this world. The lion, in particular, it was observed, was, in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, the emblem of the Babylonian empire; and this alone would suggest the inquiry, whether there were not some such special application of the same symbol here, and of the other three which are joined with it. And, moreover, the order in which they occur, which is not that which we should naturally have expected, would tend to confirm the idea that there was involved some principle of historical succession. "The first living creature was like a lion, and the second like a calf, and the third had a face as a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle."

In regard to the first, the imagery of Daniel's vision, making the lion the symbol of Babylon, might be illustrated by many passages of the prophets. One, in particular, of the prophet Jeremiah, is cited by a Jewish writer, Rabbi Eliezer, in support of his application to the Babylonian empire of the face of the lion among the cherubim. "I will bring

² Zech. vi. 11—13.

evil from the north, and a great destruction. *The lion* is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate³.” Again, in the prophecy against Edom, the Chaldean invader is described as coming up “like a *lion* from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong⁴,” and elsewhere by the same prophet the title is applied to the kings and conquerors of Nineveh and Babylon, almost as a distinctive appellation. “Israel is a scattered sheep; *the lions* have driven him away: first the king of *Assyria* hath devoured him; and then the king of *Babylon* hath broken his bones⁵.” And again in another passage, where the mention, immediately following, of Egyptian enemies, makes the symbolical designation of the kings of Assyria and Babylon the more striking. “Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? why is he spoiled? *The young lions* roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities were burned without inhabitant. *Also the children of Noph and Tahapanes* have broken the crown of thy head⁶.” The reference here to the conquerors of the East, as distinguished from the Egyptians, is the more manifest, from the mention made, in the same chapter, of these two great powers of the ancient world between which the chosen people lay, and which were alike the causes of Jerusalem’s sin and the instruments of her punishment. “What hast thou to do in the way of *Egypt*, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of *Assyria*, to drink the waters of the river?” “Thou also shalt be ashamed of *Egypt*, as thou wast ashamed of *Assyria*⁷.”

³ Jer. iv. 6, 7.⁴ Chap. xlix. 19.⁵ Chap. l. 17.⁶ Chap. ii. 14—16.⁷ Vv. 18. 36.

And if the lion was the emblem of Assyria, and of the other monarchies which inherited the same seats of dominion in the Eastern world, the calf, or the ox, was not less appropriate as the emblem of Egypt. And the image is so applied, in the same prophetic volume of Jeremiah, in a passage which Bishop Warburton⁸ has pointed out as a striking instance of symbolical language. “Egypt is a very fair *heifer*; but destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north. Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks: for they also are turned back, and are fled away together⁹.” The Psalmist likewise, in a passage already referred to, employs the same imagery, where, among the nations that were to be subdued by the Divine power, Egypt seems to be especially alluded to¹. “Rebuke the wild beast of the reed, the multitude of the *bulls*, with the *calves* of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver; scatter thou the people that delight in war. Princes shall come out of *Egypt*; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God².”

With regard, indeed, to this second symbol it may be remarked, that the kingdom of Egypt is not one of the four which are symbolically delineated in the visions of the book of Daniel, and which are commonly called the four great monarchies. But, though it did not occupy a place in the succession of empires which followed the Babylonian, in that series which continued onward to the times of the Gospel, yet in the wider survey of the ancient world, in its subordination to the universal sway of God’s

⁸ Divine Legation, book iv. Sect. 3. Works, vol. iv. pp. 95, 96.

⁹ Jer. xlv. 20, 21.

¹ Cf. sup. p. 186.

² Ps. lxviii. 30, 31.

Providence, Egypt would naturally stand side by side with Assyria. And the imagery of the prophet Ezekiel, who describes the Assyrian and the Egyptian as the two fairest and loftiest cedars in the garden of God, "the choice and best of Lebanon³," it has been well observed by an able lecturer on this foundation, has in it "the accuracy of historical truth, as well as the beauty of a poetic, and the force of a moral representation." "Originally," as Mr. Davison remarks, Egypt "was the most prosperous, opulent, and powerful of kingdoms; till the growth of the Assyrian power divided with it its glory, and then together they were the two foremost nations of the ancient world⁴." And they were the nations, moreover, by whom the fortunes of God's chosen people were specially affected, and whose power and idolatries most endangered their safety; while, at the same time, they gave occasion for the most signal displays of the supreme deity of the God of Israel. And hence with peculiar significancy would the symbols of Egypt and Assyria be seen, in the earlier ages of the Divine dispensations, sustaining the footstool of His throne "who sat upon the Cherubim."

It would lead us away, however, too far from our immediate subject, into the minute examination of the descriptions given of the living creatures, or cherubim, in the Old Testament, were we to enter fully on the grounds for this application of them to the several kingdoms of the ancient world. I may state, however, that I believe this interpretation will be found to remove some difficulties, and reconcile apparent discrepancies not otherwise of easy solution. It is not till the visions of Ezekiel that we

³ Ezek. xxxi. 2, 3. 16. 18. ⁴ Davison on Prophecy, p. 481.

find explicit mention made of the two symbols which stand last in order in St. John's description, *viz.* the face of the man and that of the eagle⁵. The former of these two, it may be observed, appears more prominently in Ezekiel's description of the restored temple⁶; which circumstance would agree well with the application of these symbols, respectively, to the two last kingdoms,—namely, the Greek and the Roman,—of those same four which, as we have seen, appear to be symbolized by the four chariots in Zechariah's still later vision. The human form would fitly represent the pre-eminent civilization of Greece, and the superiority which, by this right, it claimed over the barbarians around, corresponding with that which belongs to man over the beasts of the field and the forest. And the eagle would be the not less appropriate emblem of the Roman conquests, the well known military standard of a people in whom, as it would appear, was accomplished fully the threatening which was pronounced upon the people of Israel by their great lawgiver, and which the Chaldean had partly fulfilled. “The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the *eagle* flieth⁷.” It may be regarded, perhaps, as confirming this interpretation of the last-named symbol, that, in a subsequent chapter of this same book, where the vision seems to refer to the time when, by God's overruling Providence, the Roman empire lent its power to the protection of His Church⁸, it is said that “there were given to the woman two wings of *the* great eagle” (for so it should be rendered⁹), “that she

⁵ Ezek. i. 10, &c. x. 14, &c.

⁸ Vid. inf. Lect. xi.

⁶ Ezek. xli. 19.

⁹ τοῦ ἀετοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου.

⁷ Deut. xxviii. 49.

might flee into the wilderness¹;" and it may also serve to explain the description of the fourth of the four living creatures, in the vision before us, as "like a *flying* eagle," if we apply it to a power which, at the time when the Apocalyptic vision was seen, was in the midst of its career of victory and dominion.

In vindication, if need be, of the considerations which I have ventured to suggest towards the interpretation of symbols confessedly obscure, I would plead, in the words of a learned writer on the same subject, that, "of the many conjectures which have at different times been hazarded, there are none but what have their difficulties and embarrassments," and yet "none of them have been otherwise than well received, when they have been modestly propounded; when no singular stress has been laid upon them, and nobody required to acquiesce in them, to the exclusion of all other expositions²." The spirit in which such subjects should be approached is one anxious, indeed, to understand, so far as may be permitted, what God hath revealed, but, at the same time not impatient of obscurity; willing rather, if so be, to be enabled to discover only thus much,—that there is, in the words of Inspiration and in the scenes which it unfolds, a depth of meaning, and comprehensiveness of application, which is beyond its own skill to discover; while yet the investigation of them may have served the salutary purpose of leaving an impression, elevating yet humbling, of the vast and illimitable range of the Divine dispensations, and of "the manifold wisdom of God."

We have seen that there is some intimate con-

¹ Rev. xii. 14.

sertation on the Cherubim, p.

² Archdeacon Sharp, Dis- 363.

nexion between the four seals and the four living creatures, severally; implied, as it would seem, in the call which these in turn address to the beloved disciple, as each seal is opened in succession, bidding him "Come and see." It would greatly confirm the view which has been given, on distinct grounds, of the import of the four seals and of the four living creatures, if this connecting link were discovered between them. And if we follow the progress of the Gospel over the earth under the varying aspects presented in the four seals, our view is certainly fixed in a peculiar manner on the countries which we have supposed to be marked out by the four living creatures. It was in *the East* that the Gospel first went forth on its career of victory; and among the multitude who witnessed the first effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, we read of "Parthians, and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia"—all these from the Asiatic continent³. And, next in order, we find mention made of those "in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene⁴." And it is to *Egypt* and *Africa* that our attention is specially called, when instances are given us of the bitter strifes and divisions which, through the operation of human passions, followed the preaching of the Gospel⁵. Again, the darkness of the third seal and the partial withdrawal of religious truth, were referred to the influence of heathen philosophy, and heathen superstition; and in these we recognize the offspring of *Greece*. And, finally, in the persecutions and cruelty

³ Acts ii. 9, 10.⁴ Ver. 10.⁵ *E.g.*, the schisms of the

Donatists and Circumcelliones, the Arian and other controversies in Alexandria, &c.

which close the scene, we seem to trace the dominion of *Rome*, that imperial city in whom was to be "found" in the day of retribution "the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth ⁶."

But, whatever interpretation we may be inclined to give to the imagery which describes the train of the Conqueror who is represented in the first seal, no doubt, I think, can attach to that description, as to its reference to the early times of the Gospel. And this, I would repeat, is the important point to determine in the vision before us. And if, by the attendant forms seen in the vision as following the Rider on the white horse, we are to understand the temporal calamities which our Lord had foretold as the signs of His kingdom coming in its power, we may imagine how great the support and consolation which these vivid delineations of "the beginnings of sorrows" were fitted to supply to the early Christians; continually taunted as they were with the reproach of these calamities, as occasioned by the new religion, and the wrath and vengeance awakened in the insulted deities of Paganism. What comfort to them to know assuredly, that these temporal woes were in reality the attendants on His steps who was gone forth in the greatness of His power, "conquering and to conquer!"

Or if we, His soldiers and servants in these latter days, have heard His blessed Gospel reproached by the tongue of the unbeliever, because of the evils to which its enemies can point as having followed in its wake,—the bitter contentions, the dark superstition,

⁶ Compare George Herbert's "The Church Militant."

the unrelenting persecutions, which have too often presented so sad a contrast to the spirit of pure and undefiled religion,—we need not be perplexed; for all this was foretold. The Gospel came, indeed, from God, but it came on earth: a course of warfare, in order to final success, was that which was appointed to His Church in this earthly scene. And the fulfilment of the prediction, however grievous, is but an attestation of His Divine truth, and gives the more firm assurance of His future final triumph. For HE is “called Faithful and True,” who is gone forth “conquering and to conquer;” and “His Name is called the Word of God’.”

And to Him, “who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,” be ascribed all honour and glory, might, majesty, dominion, and power, now and for evermore.

’ Rev. xix. 11. 13.

LECTURE VIII.¹

REV. vi. 17.

“ For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ? ”

IN the last Lecture we inquired into the import of the first four seals of the mystic book which it was given to the Lamb to open ; considering those four seals both with reference to their own distinct meaning, as gathered from the vision itself, illustrated by other Scripture, and also in their relation to the four living creatures, with which they appeared to be, in so remarkable a manner, connected. We found reason to think that these first four seals, taken together, might be understood to describe the going forth of the Gospel throughout the world, with the signs which immediately followed it, and perhaps also with the circumstances which more remotely attended its changeful progress over the face of the earth.

In the well-known prophecy of our Blessed Lord to which we had occasion to refer—the prophecy in which He declares that the “ Gospel of the kingdom ” should “ be preached in all the world for a

¹ Preached Jan. 7, 1844.

witness to all nations," before "the end" should "come"—He had foretold certain signs which, as we have seen, would appear to correspond with the imagery of the four seals in the vision before us, taken in its most literal application. "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows²." Our Lord proceeded further to speak of trials which would more immediately concern His own followers, and particularly those first disciples whom He then addressed. "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another³." Or, as we read more fully in the record of the same prophecy given by another of the Evangelists,—in a passage which, in like manner, follows immediately upon the mention of those "beginnings of sorrows,"—"But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten, and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the Gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them

² Matt. xxiv. 7, 8.³ Vv. 9, 10.

to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved ⁴." "In your patience possess ye your souls ⁵." Such were the trials which our Blessed Lord had led His followers to expect; and the scenes unfolded in the vision before us closely correspond with the course of His Divine prophecy. Whether or not we trace in the imagery of the fourth seal a reference to the sundry kinds of death by which the early disciples were condemned to die, we have, at all events, in the fifth seal, to which we are now to proceed, the description of days of persecution as having already come upon the Christian Church. "And when he had opened the fifth seal," says St. John, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain,"—or rather, "that *had been* slain ⁶,—for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled ⁷." The description of this their earnest expostulation, if so it may be called,—their eager looking for the day of triumph,—agrees well with the thoughts and hopes that would be awakened by the prospect which their Lord's prediction had opened, of an "end," then shortly to come, when these signs were fulfilled upon them.

And, in the vision before us, the sixth seal, which

⁴ Mark xiii. 9—13.

⁵ Luke xxi. 19.

⁶ τῶν ἐσφαγμένων.

⁷ Rev. vi. 9—11.

immediately follows, seems to describe a great and general consummation. “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scrawl when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand⁸?”

The language here employed might seem, at first sight, such as could hardly be applied to any thing short of the awful scenes of the final day of doom. But, in the interpretation of Scripture language, we need to be continually reminded of those words of the Almighty by His prophet,—“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts⁹.” If, in our human estimate of things, we are sometimes in danger, on the one hand, of giving an exaggerated importance to what may seem to us striking events and critical periods in the world’s annals, as though

⁸ Vv. 12—17.

⁹ Isa. lv. 8, 9.

they must needs occupy a prominent place in the sacred roll of prophecy, we shall too probably, on the other hand, in many instances, fail to discover, for lack of spiritual discernment, those turning points in the evolving history of God's spiritual kingdom upon earth, which are there described in words "not which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," and which can be interpreted only by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual¹."

But, before we proceed to examine the language of the passage before us by the light of other parts of prophetic Scripture, I would point out the striking difference between the description here given us and that which we find in a later part of the Apocalypse, and which undoubtedly refers to the scenes of the last Judgment. "I saw," says St. John, in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, "a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which was the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire²." There is something in this description,—a dimness and vastness of outline, an absence of all the objects

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 13.

² Rev. xx. 11—15.

which had filled the scene in the former vision,—the earth and the heaven now fled away, the throne of God and of the Lamb seen no more in His temple, amid the assembly of His worshippers, but, in its stead, the throne of the Eternal Judge, now revealed in the midst of the universe, His dispensations of grace ended, and the time of judgment come—there is something here which cannot fail to strike us as altogether different from the imagery in the earlier vision. The one scene is distinguished from the other, not less in regard to this difference of character and colouring, than with respect to the place which they respectively occupy in the volume of the Revelation; the one appearing almost at the very opening of the Apocalyptic vision, the other very near its close.

It has, indeed, been supposed, that the first six seals “contain a short, rapid, and general sketch of the progress of Christianity from its first establishment in the world, to that time, yet future, when the enemies of Christ shall be separated for punishment, and his faithful servants for heavenly favour and rewards;” the seventh seal, on this hypothesis, “retracing the history of the Christian Church,” and supplying “many events which were reserved for a more *particular* notice and display.” And it is observed that we have elsewhere,—as, for instance, in the book of Daniel, as well as in the Revelation,—instances of “this method of divine prediction, presenting at first a general sketch and outline, and afterward a more complete and finished picture of events³.”

The observation is undoubtedly correct, so far as

³ Woodhouse, Annot. p. 165.

distinct visions are concerned; as, for instance, Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the image, and Daniel's of the four beasts⁴. But the case, it will be admitted, is widely different where *the same vision* is carried on. In the instance before us, where the seven seals of the book in the right hand of the Lamb are opened in succession, we should expect to find the events contained under the seventh seal *consequent* upon those of the six preceding, rather than synchronizing with them. And this, I think, on more minute examination, will be found to be the case. We saw under the fifth seal the souls of the martyrs calling for vengeance upon them that dwelt on the earth; and they were bidden to rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. In a subsequent part of the vision (in the eleventh chapter), at the sounding of the seventh trumpet,—the seven trumpets making up the seventh seal,—we read, “there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that

⁴ Cf. sup. Lect. iii. pp. 60, 61. It will appear, I think, that we have a similar instance of the opening of a distinct vision, and consequently this retracing of earlier events, in

chap. xii. of the Revelation (vid. inf. Lect. xi.), and also, I am strongly inclined to think, in chap. xx.; which latter portion, however, does not come into our immediate view.

they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward"—or rather, "that thou shouldest give *the* reward⁵," the long promised, expected reward—"unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth⁶." The season of patient waiting, spoken of under the fifth seal, had, it would appear, at length come to its close, when now the seventh seal was so far unfolded; the two witnesses, their appointed time of ministry being accomplished, had been slain and raised up again; and the vengeance, long delayed, was now at length to be wrought; even as it had been promised, that "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he" should "begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he" had "declared to his servants the prophets⁷."

And, in like manner, if we examine minutely the description contained in the sixth seal, comparing it with later visions, we shall find, I think, indications which would clearly show, that it is to be regarded not as itself the final consummation, but rather as the germ out of which the future fortunes of the Church and of her enemies were gradually to unfold. Thus, at the opening of the sixth seal, we are told, "there was a great earthquake;" but afterwards, upon the pouring out of the seventh vial—(the seven vials, as I shall hereafter have occasion to show, being the completion of the vengeance wrought under the seven trumpets)—when "the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done;" we are told,

⁵ τὸν μισθόν.⁶ Chap. xi. 15—18.⁷ Chap. x. 7.

“there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, *such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great*⁸.” Again, in the description before us of the sixth seal, it is said, “every mountain and island removed out of their place⁹,” shaken as if in terror; but in the later vision where the seventh vial is poured out, it is said, as though all things were now nearer to their threatened dissolution, “every island fled away, and the mountains were not found¹.” Under the sixth seal, “the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and every bondman, and every free man,” are described as hiding themselves in terror at the anticipated vengeance of the day of Divine wrath now breaking upon them²; but, as if the actual scene of destruction had unfolded itself more and more fully, when we arrive at the description of the fall of Babylon, whose day of visitation came then at length when the seventh vial had been poured out, we read there of “*the kings of the earth*” bewailing and lamenting for her, and then of “the merchants of the earth,” “which were made *rich* by her,” and were “*the great men* of the earth,” weeping and mourning over her³: and still later, when the Rider on the white horse goes forth for the final triumph over His enemies, an angel is seen standing in the sun, and crying “with a loud voice to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven,” bidding them to “eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, . . . and the flesh of all men, both *free* and *bond*, both small and great⁴.”

⁸ Chap. xvi. 17, 18.

⁹ Chap. vi. 14.

¹ Chap. xvi. 20.

² Chap. vi. 15.

³ Chap. xviii. 9, 11.

⁴ Chap. xix. 17, 18.

Lastly, under the sixth seal, or what may be regarded as the continuation of it, contained in the following chapter, we find “the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,” commanded not to hurt the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till the servants of God had been sealed in their foreheads, to be preserved by that mark amid the scenes of destruction⁵. In the subsequent vision, under the seventh seal, we read of the first angel sounding, on which there followed plagues “upon *the earth*,” “and the third part of *trees* was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up;” and the second angel sounded, and plagues fell upon *the sea*⁶; and still later, under the fifth trumpet, we read of the locusts, that “it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads⁷.” These passages, taken together, seem clearly to discover scenes which contain the further unfolding of that which is disclosed under the sixth seal, in the passage immediately before us.

It would appear, then, that in the imagery of the sixth seal is described, not that last day of doom which is to determine for ever the eternal destinies of men, as personal and individual agents, but rather a great crisis and consummation in the history of God’s dispensations, revealing the prospect of that general overthrow which should in due time involve in it the whole world; and also unfolding, as more fully to be manifested in time to come, the privileges and blessings which, in the kingdom and Church of Christ, should be the portion of those who found

⁵ Chap. vii. 2, 3.⁶ Chap. viii. 7.⁷ Chap. ix. 4.

within its blissful sanctuary a shelter from the gathering storm.

But it is time to proceed to the more particular examination of the imagery here employed. "I beheld," says St. John, "and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scrawl when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." Imagery very similar to this is found in the prophetic books of the Old Testament. Thus Isaiah, in the thirteenth chapter of his prophecies, where he foretels the destruction of Babylon and its empire, speaks of that impending overthrow as "the day of the Lord," "at hand," come "as a destruction from the Almighty," "to lay the land desolate," and to "destroy the sinners thereof out of it." "For the stars of heaven," he says, "and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." "Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger⁸." And, in the thirty-fourth chapter, we find the same prophet thus declaring the "indignation of the Lord upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies," and specially upon Idumæa, "the people of" His "curse," the type of His Church's enemies⁹. "All the host of heaven shall

⁸ Isa. xiii. 6. 9, 10. 13.

⁹ Isa. xxxiv. 2. 5.

be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree¹.” The imagery of these two prophecies is identical with that of the vision before us: and that the destruction foretold in the last cited passage of Isaiah, is of kingdoms of this world, *previous* and *preparatory* to the coming of the Gospel and the establishment of the Christian Church, is evident from the description which follows immediately upon it, and which undoubtedly received its fulfilment in the times of the Gospel, and the wondrous works which then were wrought. “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them,” thus the prophecy continues in the thirty-fifth chapter, “and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. . . . Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing² :”—a prediction to which our Lord seems clearly to refer, when He bids the messengers of John carry back to their master the report of these mighty works, as the proof that “He that should come” was in very deed even then standing among them³. And in another passage of the same prophet, the terror which should overwhelm the transgressors among his people, in that “day of the Lord of hosts” which was then nigh at hand, is painted in language.

¹ Ver. 4.² Chap. xxxv. 1. 3—6.³ Matt. xi. 4, 5.

closely parallel with the concluding part of the description in the vision before us. "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty." "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made every one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth⁴."

But the first part of the description before us finds a yet closer parallel in a well-known passage of the prophet Joel. The prophet has been describing the fearful march of that "great army" which the Almighty would send in judgment upon His land, in the threatened "day of the Lord;" an army before whom "the earth" should "quake," and "the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon be dark, and the stars withdraw their shining⁵." A promise is given of the removal of this judgment, and of the outpouring, afterward, of the gifts of the Spirit; and then the word of prophecy proceeds—"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood*, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance,

⁴ Isa. ii. 10. 19—21.

⁵ Joel ii. 1—11.

as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call⁶.” The description in the vision before us is strikingly similar—“The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.” And here too, as there, these are signs which usher in a “great and terrible day of the Lord;” and immediately following, as we shall presently see, is the promise given of a “remnant,” “in mount Zion and in Jerusalem,” to be delivered from the general destruction. And this passage of the prophet Joel we have inspired authority for referring to the first times of the Gospel dispensation. St. Peter, in his address to the assembled multitudes on the day of Pentecost, cites this prediction of the outpouring of the Spirit as the explanation of the wondrous things which they had just seen and heard; and implies not less plainly, that the signs of coming vengeance which the prophet had foretold were now speedily to follow. And therefore “did he testify and exhort” those who then heard him, “saying, Save yourselves from *this untoward generation*’.”

The language in which the prophet speaks of “the great and terrible day of the Lord” will appear to be yet more perfectly identified with that day of vengeance which marked the first coming of Christ’s kingdom, and its establishment on the ruins of the Jewish polity, if we compare with this prophecy of Joel that passage of Malachi, which, from its reference to the mission of him who was sent as our Lord’s forerunner at His first advent,—for so our Lord Himself hath taught us to interpret the prophecy⁸,—must undoubtedly be referred to those times. “Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as

⁶ Vv. 30—32.

⁷ Acts ii. 16—21. 40.

⁸ Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 12.

an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;”—that “day spring from on high” of which the hymn of Zacharias, the father of the holy Baptist, speaks⁹;—“and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet *before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*:”—the words in the original are identically the same with those which we find in Joel, and which are rendered in our Authorized Version, “before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come¹”—“and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse².”

But, from the inspired authority of prophets and apostles, combining thus to illustrate the language of the last of their sacred company, the apostolic prophet of the New Testament, we must proceed to consider the words of Him, the great Prophet of His Church, to whom was given the mystic book, in the vision of the beloved disciple, and whose peculiar prerogative it was to open its seals. In that prophecy of our Lord, already referred to, which is recorded by all the evangelists beside St. John, after de-

⁹ Luke i. 78.

iii. 4. Heb. (E. V. Mal. iv. 5. Joel ii. 31.)

לפני בוא יום יהיה הגדול¹

² Mal. iv. 1—6.

יהנורא Mal. iii. 23. Joel

scribing those calamities which should be “the beginning of sorrows,” the afflictions and persecutions which were to fall upon His disciples, and that preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom “throughout the world,” which should be “for a witness unto all nations” before the end should come, our Blessed Lord proceeds to speak of “the abomination of desolation” standing in the holy place, as the signal for them which were in Judea to “flee into the mountains.” And happy would it be for them, if their flight were “not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day;” “for then shall be great tribulation,” saith our Lord, “such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened³.” Our Lord then gives a warning to His followers against being deceived by false Christs and false prophets, by men saying, “Lo, here is Christ, or there”—“Behold, he is in the desert”—“behold, he is in the secret chambers.” “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so,” saith He, “shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together⁴.” “Immediately after the tribulation of those days,” thus the prophecy proceeds as recorded by St. Matthew,—or, as it is in St. Mark, “in those days, after that tribulation⁵,”—“shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken⁶.” Or, as we read in St. Luke, “There shall be signs in the sun, and in

³ Matt. xxiv. 15—22.

⁴ Vv. 23—28.

⁵ Mark xiii. 24.

⁶ Matt. xxiv. 29.

the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken⁷." "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory⁸." We have, here, mention made, together with the darkening of the sun and the moon, of the falling of the stars of heaven, and the distress of the inhabitants of the earth. And the remainder of the description, in the passage before us of the Apocalyptic vision, where men are represented as calling on the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them, seems to find its parallel in those other prophetic words which our Lord addressed to that "great company of people, and of women," which followed Him on His way to the mount of crucifixion, bewailing and lamenting Him. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us⁹."

But the description, in our Lord's prophecy, of the coming of the Son of man and the signs attending it, is still further carried on, in imagery strongly resembling that which, in the vision before us, follows immediately at the beginning of the next

⁷ Luke xxi. 25, 26.

⁸ Matt. xxiv. 30.

⁹ Luke xxiii. 27—30.

chapter, upon the scene of terror revealed under the sixth seal. "And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn," is the language of our Lord's prophecy already cited, "and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels," the prophecy continues, "with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from one end of heaven to the other¹." Or, as it is in St. Mark, "And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven²." Let us compare with this the language of St. John's vision. "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel³." "The elect," spoken of by our Blessed Lord are, undoubtedly, the same with those "elect" for whose sake the days of tribulation should be shortened; that "remnant" of whom the prophet Joel had spoken, "whom the Lord" should "call;" "the remnant according to the election of grace," of

¹ Matt. xxiv. 31.² Mark xiii. 27.³ Rev. vii. 1—4.

whom the Apostle St. Paul speaks, comparing them with the seven thousand in the days of Elias; and who had obtained the salvation promised to Israel, when the great body of the nation of "Israel after the flesh" were cast away⁴. Though the number of Israel were as the sand of the sea, a remnant only, as the prophet Isaiah had spoken, were to be saved; when the Almighty should "finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness," bringing to pass the "consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land⁵,"—"the consummation and that determined," as Daniel also had described it, to "be poured upon the desolate⁶." A remnant was to be saved; a certain number, designated here as "a hundred and forty and four thousand, of all the tribes of the children of Israel;" twelve thousand from every tribe (for so is the manner of Scripture to use definite numbers for indefinite), marking a certain election, a predetermined order and law of the Divine procedure in the mingled dispensation of mercy and judgment.

And, looking to historical fact, we see that in that great assembly on the day of Pentecost, which formed the first fruits of the Christian Church, there were "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven⁷." Again, when St. Paul was at Jerusalem, at another feast of Pentecost, some seven and twenty years afterwards, we find St. James, the "brother of our Lord," the first bishop of Jerusalem, and the elders of the Church there, telling him "how many thousands"—or rather, "myriads," tens of thousands—of Jews there were that believed⁸: and the

⁴ Rom. xi. 5. 7.

⁵ Isa. x. 21—23, cited in Rom. ix. 27, 28.

⁶ Dan. ix. 27.

⁷ Acts ii. 5.

⁸ Acts xxi. 20. Θεωρεῖς, ἀδελφὲ, πόσαι μυριάδες εἰσὶν Ἰουδαίων τῶν πεπιστευκότων.

same St. James addresses his general Epistle “to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad⁹.” St. Peter also, in like manner, writes “to the elect strangers of the dispersion throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia¹ ;” and sends to them the salutation of “the Church which” was “at Babylon, elected together with” them². In these Epistles, as also in that of St. Paul to the Hebrews³, the faithful remnant are addressed as those who, having themselves been called to undergo severe trials and persecutions, were to be preserved through days of vengeance which were coming on the disobedient, while the kingdom of Christ was drawing near in the more full manifestation of its power and glory. “Who are kept,” says St. Peter, “by the power of God through faith unto salvation (which is) ready to be revealed in the last time.” “The end of all things is at hand ; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. . . . For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God ; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God⁴ ?” And St. James, in like manner, in a passage which seems graphically descriptive of the latter days of the Jewish history. “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. . . . Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. . . . Ye have condemned and killed the just ; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the

⁹ James i. 1.¹ 1 Pet. i. 1.² Chap. v. 13.³ Comp. Heb. x. 32—39 ; xii. 26—29.⁴ 1 Pet. i. 5 ; iv. 7. 12. 17.

precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh⁵.”

But, for the full understanding of the description given in the passage before us, of the sealing of the elect of Israel, before the angels who were commissioned to destroy were suffered to hurt the earth or the sea, we must turn to a remarkable vision of the prophet Ezekiel, to which we have already had occasion to refer, and from which the imagery in the vision before us seems to be borrowed. Carried “in the visions of God” to Jerusalem, to see the abominations which were destined to bring speedy destruction upon the guilty city, the prophet heard, from the throne of the Divine glory, the “voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer’s inkhorn by his side. . . . And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary⁶.” So in

⁵ James v. 1. 3. 6—8.

⁶ Ezek. ix. 1—6.

the vision before us, the angelic ministers of destruction are ready to execute their commission; but first another angel appears, having the seal of the living God; and the faithful remnant are marked as the objects of special protection, before the work of vengeance begins;—that chosen remnant who are described, in the language of our Blessed Lord's prophecy, as "accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man⁷."

But if it was "to the Jew first," it was "also to the Gentile," that, in the coming of Christ's kingdom, with its terrors and its privileges, was to be exhibited a lively image and foretaste of "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile⁸." When the disciples, gathered together to our Lord before His Ascension, asked of Him whether He would at that time restore again the kingdom to Israel, His words, in reply to their question, taught them to look for a kingdom which, while it had its origin in Jerusalem, and was to spread from thence, was destined to include within its limits all the nations of the world. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me,"

⁷ Luke xxi. 36.

⁸ Rom. ii. 5—10.

He said, “both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth⁹.” “Repentance and remission of sins” were to be “preached in his name *among all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem¹.” In the visions of Daniel, “the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven,”—a description which our Lord seems to embody in His prophecy already referred to, and also in His solemn words before the High Priest and the Council, “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven²”—“and there was given him,” saith the prophet, “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him³.” “It was necessary,” said Paul and Barnabas to the Jews in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, “that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth⁴.” And the passage of Isaiah here cited is remarkable for the similarity of its context to St. John’s description of the sealed remnant of the twelve tribes. “And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up *the tribes of Jacob*, and to

⁹ Acts i. 6—8.¹ Luke xxiv. 47.² Matt. xxvi. 64.³ Dan. vii. 13, 14.⁴ Acts xiii. 46, 47.

restore *the preserved of Israel*, I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth⁵.” If, as St. Paul speaks, “blindness in part happened unto Israel,” it was until “the fulness of the Gentiles” were “come in⁶.”

And accordingly, in the vision before us, after the sealing of the “hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel,” St. John proceeds, “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb⁷.” Thus, in the one Church of Jew and Gentile, was made known “the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him⁸:”—“and to make all men see what” was “the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world” had “been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God⁹.” “And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen :

⁵ Isa. xlix. 5, 6. Comp.
v. 7, 8. 18—23.

⁶ Rom. xi. 25.

⁷ Rev. vii. 9, 10.

⁸ Eph. i. 9, 10.

⁹ Eph. iii. 9, 10.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen ¹."

"And one of the elders," St. John continues, "answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation," or rather, "These are they which came"—or, more literally, "which are coming—out of *the* great tribulation ²,"—it is the same word which our Blessed Lord had employed in speaking of "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be ³"—"and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ⁴." The present tense of the participle, describing these Christian saints as "coming," one after another (for such is the exact force of the words), out of the great tribulation, to swell the company of worshippers in the spiritual temple, is worthy of remark; and may be regarded as supplying another proof, in addition to those already given, that it is the *opening*, not the *closing* scene, in the history of the Christian Church, which is here brought to our view. The description may be compared with that which we find in the second chapter of the Acts, where we read how "the Lord added to the Church daily them that were saved ⁵"—saved from that "untoward generation ⁶"—delivered from the unbelief and condemnation in which those around them were held, and joined to the congregation

¹ Rev. vii. 11, 12.

² Οἱ τοῦτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἐρχόμενοι ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης.

³ Matt. xxiv. 21. ἔσται γὰρ τότε θλίψις μεγάλη, κ.τ.λ.

⁴ Rev. vii. 13, 14.

⁵ Acts ii. 47. τοὺς σωζομένους.

⁶ Ver. 40. σώθητε ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς τῆς σκολιᾶς ταύτης.

of Christ's redeemed. And if the worship and service in which, in the vision before us, they are described as now engaged, seem to belong rather to the heavenly than to the earthly state, we may remember how, in other passages of Scripture, as the Church of Christ is designated as "the kingdom of heaven," so are the spiritual privileges of Christians set forth, as though they who had believed in Him had *even now* entered on the enjoyment of that which, in its fulness of bliss, shall be their portion *hereafter*. "Ye *are come*'," saith the Apostle, addressing his brethren of the Hebrews, "unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel ⁸."

"Therefore are they before the throne of God," says the beloved disciple, admitted to the vision of the heavenly sanctuary, "and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ⁹." The change of tense from the present to the future, in the latter part of this passage, is observable; especially when we find that the several points in the description before us are brought out, as it were,

⁷ προσεληλύθατε.

⁸ Heb. xii. 22—24.

⁹ Rev. vii. 15—17.

more fully towards the close of the Apocalyptic vision. In the twenty-first chapter, where St. John describes "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," he says, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away¹." The comparison of this passage with that immediately before us, will further confirm the conclusion already arrived at, respecting the place which this earlier vision must be regarded as occupying in the history of the Christian Church, *viz.* as unfolding the spiritual and heavenly privileges which were to be the portion of those who, out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, were called into its holy fellowship². The prophet Isaiah had described, in similar language, the blessings to be imparted to the Gentile world by Him whom he had just before spoken of, in words already quoted, as One who was to be given "for a light to the Gentiles," and that He might be for "salvation unto the end of the earth." "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them³."

And in another very remarkable prophecy we find

¹ Rev. xxi. 2—4.

in a similar manner, unfolded there.

² Cf. sup. pp. 228—231, in regard to the vision of wrath,

³ Isa. xlix. 10.

a description which can be referred only to the times of the Gospel, introduced, as in the vision before us, by a scene of darkness and terror on the earth, out of the midst of which a remnant is left to glorify God, in songs of praise which should swell from the isles of the Gentiles. The prophecy to which I refer is contained in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of the book of Isaiah. "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. . . . The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. . . . When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. . . . And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously. . . . And in this mountain," the prophecy continues, "shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, . . . And he will destroy in this mountain the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take

away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it ⁴."

The view which has now been taken of that portion of St. John's vision which contains the sixth seal, and carries us to the end of the seventh chapter of the Revelation, will derive still further evidence from the context immediately following, if it be admitted that the seventh seal is, as I have endeavoured to show, *consecutive* on the six preceding. The scene which immediately follows those which we have been examining is thus described. "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand ⁵." The holy congregation of the Christian Church, gathered out of all lands, being now assembled, as "in heavenly places in Christ," its solemn worship begins, described here in imagery taken from the service of the Jewish temple; those trumpets meanwhile being ready to sound which were to mark the termination, after a brief space, of the days of peace to the Christian Church, and her entrance upon the time of her appointed warfare. It will be recollected that, in the description given in the subsequent prophecy, of the later glory of the hea-

⁴ Isa. xxiv. 1. 4. 13, 14. 21 ⁵ Rev. viii. 1—4.
—23; xxv. 6—8.

venly Jerusalem itself, it is said, as in contrast with the vision before us, "I saw *no temple* therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it⁶."

Before, however, we conclude the examination of the sixth seal, it may be well to advert to the opinion of those interpreters who have explained it as describing the overthrow of Paganism, followed by the establishment of Christianity on the throne of the Roman Empire, the freedom thereby obtained for the Christian worship, and the accession of converts to the new religion. It must be observed, however, as a difficulty in the way of this interpretation, that, even if it were granted that these events would sufficiently correspond with a description of peace and purity which seems to belong rather to apostolic times, and to the days of persecution, when the Christian converts were seen to come⁷ "out of the great tribulation," our view is fixed upon the earlier period by that prophecy of our Blessed Lord which, if it has been rightly applied in the interpretation of His disciple's vision, would specially refer it to the time when, by the destruction of the Jewish polity, and the winding up of the preparatory dispensation, His kingdom came with power. It may at the same time be observed that, in the view of Prophetic Inspiration, which looks upon things not in their mere chronological relations, but as they are essentially connected one with another in the order of the Divine counsels, at that crisis when the Jewish dispensation was drawing to an end, Paganism was, in fact, tottering to its fall; and the kings of the earth, and its rich men, its chief captains and

⁶ Chap. xxi. 22.

⁷ This seems, unquestionably, the force of the present tense

(vid. sup.)—"they which *are coming* out of the great tribulation."

mighty men, might well be described as looking with awe and amazement at the things which were coming on the earth, when a new kingdom was thus brought in, before which all earthly pride and power were destined in due time to fall. And the beginning of this new order of things, as our Lord had Himself declared, in words which solemnly conclude that portion of His Divine prophecy which we have been considering, was to be while some of those who heard Him were yet living on the earth. "Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away⁸."

In applying, however, to the events of that period imagery like that which we find in the vision before us, it must be constantly borne in mind what it is which constitutes the peculiar propriety of the imagery so employed. We must remember that it is not merely, or mainly, the occurrence of scenes of destruction and slaughter, of suffering and distress, such as mark the last days of Jerusalem's history,—fearful indeed and harrowing as is that tale of misery, as their own historian has told it,—but rather the winding up, in awful judgment, of a dispensation which had been established at the first by solemn sanctions of Heaven, and which was now to give place to another, still more Divine and glorious, a new dispensation to be brought in, amid signs and wonders, by His power who had said, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven⁹." And therefore it is that the coming in of this kingdom, and the preparation made for it by the sweeping away of that earlier and temporary dispensation

⁸ Matt. xxiv. 34, 35. Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁹ Heb. xii. 26, quoting Hagg. ii. 6. 21.

which, through a long course of ages, had witnessed to the greater glory of this which was to follow it, is described in terms inferior only, in dignity and awfulness, to those which are employed to shadow out the final consummation of all things.

The two scenes, as I have endeavoured to show, are distinct in the visions of the Apocalypse, as they are also in the prophetic discourse of our Lord. The former we have contemplated, as depicted in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, where we read of "the sign of the Son of man" appearing "in heaven," and of "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory¹." The latter we find foretold in the following chapter, the twenty-fifth, where the scene is described of that final judgment of the righteous and the wicked which shall then take place, "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," and He "shall sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats;" and the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal²." And these two periods in the history of the new kingdom are still more clearly exhibited, in their distinctness, where our Lord, on another occasion, passes immediately from the mention of the one to the other. In the sixteenth chapter of the same Gospel, we find Him first warning His followers of the danger of losing the soul, by reminding them of the awful realities of the day of Judgment, and then going on, it would seem, to speak of a nearer manifesta-

¹ Matt. xxiv. 30.

² Chap. xxv. 31—46.

tion of power, the pledge and foretaste of that which was to come. “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom³”—or, as it is in St. Luke, “till they see the kingdom of God⁴,” or, in St. Mark, “till they see the kingdom of God come with power⁵.” And it came, in very deed, visibly with power, from the time when, amid the wrath which was poured on His enemies, the elder dispensation was brought to its end, and the everlasting kingdom, the “kingdom which cannot be moved,” was set up in the midst of the earth—the kingdom of Him whom Daniel “saw in the night visions,” and He “came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed⁶.”

³ Matt. xvi. 26—28.

⁴ Luke ix. 27.

⁵ Mark ix. 1.

⁶ Dan. vii. 13, 14.

LECTURE IX.¹

REV. viii. 5, 6.

“ And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.”

WE considered, in the last Lecture, the imagery of the sixth seal, and the description following upon it, which occupies the seventh chapter of the book of the Revelation. We saw that in the “great earthquake” described under that seal, with the fearful signs attending it,—the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of the stars of heaven, the distress and terror of the inhabitants of the earth,—comparing the language there employed with other passages of prophetic Scripture, and, in particular, with our Blessed Lord’s prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, we might recognize a vivid representation of that great crisis in the history of God’s dispensations, when, by the overthrow of the Jewish œconomy, in awful judgment, He gave visible signs of the bringing in of that new kingdom which was henceforth to be the scene of His Providential

¹ Preached Feb. 4, 1844.

agency, His works of power and grace. The removal of that elder system, when now it had subserved its temporary purpose, and did but stand in the way of that which was ready to be revealed in its more abiding form and its surpassing glory, was but the prelude of a general overthrow which was to involve in it all earthly power. But while yet those ministers of vengeance were withheld "to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea," a remnant was sealed of all the tribes of Israel, and a great multitude gathered, "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," to swell the song of praise continually offered in the spiritual, the heavenly temple. The great congregation of Christian worshippers being thus gathered together, there followed, in the seventh seal, what seemed a description of the holy worship of the Christian sanctuary, represented under imagery borrowed from the Jewish temple.

But first, on the opening of that seventh seal, there was a solemn pause.—"When he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour²." There is a reference here, perhaps, as some commentators have supposed, to the silence in the temple worship, when the priest went in to burn incense in the temple of the Lord, and meanwhile "the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense³." Or, perhaps,—since, in the vision before us, the description of the offering of the incense follows after⁴,—we are to understand this interval of silence as marking rather the entrance on a new scene in the unfolding

² Rev. viii. 1.

³ Luke i. 9, 10. Vid. Hammond, Sir Isaac Newton, Low-

man, &c.

⁴ Vv. 3, 4. Woodhouse, Annot.

revelation of the Church's history; containing, at the same time, the promise of a short period to be granted her of peaceful enjoyment of her heavenly privileges, before her warfare was to begin⁵. "I saw," says St. John, "the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound⁶."

If now we turn to the early records of the Christian Church, in the first days of her earthly history, we find a remarkable space, from the destruction of Jerusalem to the beginning of the second century, an interval of thirty years, in which the historian can scarcely find an event to record. A late learned writer on the early history of the Church has noticed it as a singular circumstance⁷. And when we con-

⁵ Or perhaps, with Bp. Newton, we may combine these interpretations in one. See Dr. Todd's "Discourses on the Apocalypse," p. 129, note.

⁶ Vv. 2—6.

⁷ Burton's "Lectures on the Ecclesiastical History of the First Century," p. 335. "There are reasons for thinking that few of the Apostles survived

St. Peter and St. Paul; and if we look from the date of their martyrdom [A.D. 67 or 68] to the end of the century, we have a period of at least thirty years, which must have been eventful in the infancy of the Church, but which in the pages of ecclesiastical history is little more than a blank." Comp. p. 362.

sider what are the things which, for the most part—such is the nature of man—make the page of the Church's history most eventful, we shall see in this absence of material for the historian a proof of the purity and blessedness which then prevailed. The period in question coincides with that of the continuance on earth of the beloved disciple, the last of the Apostolic company, when his brethren, martyrs in “the great tribulation,” had now been taken to their rest: and it is the same period which the early ecclesiastical historians have marked as that during which the Church, as they tell us, retained her virgin purity, while St. John, and they who had learnt of him, still presided over the Churches, even to the days of Trajan⁸. And the description given in the vision before us of the solemn offering of united prayer, “the prayers of all saints,” upon the golden altar from the angel's hand, seems to correspond with that picture of the Christian Church, and of the unity of its holy worship, which is given us in the epistles of Ignatius, who was bishop of the Church at Antioch for nearly forty years, including this precise period, namely, from the destruction of Jerusalem to the reign of the Emperor Trajan. Throughout his epistles we find him holding up to the disciples the pattern of Christian unity and perfection to be exhibited in each Church, under its chief minister,—its “angel,” in the language of St. John's vision⁹,—while the congregation of the faithful were found joining in one chorus of praise, “with one mind and one mouth,” and sending up, from the Church's altar, to the throne of God

⁸ Hegesippus, ap. Euseb. H. E. iv. 22; iii. 32. Burton, Lectures, sup. cit. p. 383.

⁹ Comp. Rev. i. 20; ii. 1. 8. 12, &c.

prayers prevailing with Him by their perfect and heavenly unity¹. And that which St. John beheld in vision,—in the offering up of those prayers with much incense, ascending from the altar with a sweet savour to the Most High,—seems like the counterpart of that prophecy of Malachi which, in the early times of the Church, was recognized as then receiving its fulfilment in the solemn service of her sanctuary². The prediction is the more closely parallel, inasmuch as it occurs in immediate connexion with the declaration, that the sacrifices and offerings of the Jewish temple should no more be accepted. “I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place *incense*

¹ Vid. Ignatii Epistt. *passim*. —E. g. Ep. ad Ephes. c. 5. “Let no man deceive himself; if a man be not within the altar [*θυσιαστηρίου*, as in St. John’s vision], he is deprived of the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two be of such force, (as we are told) how much more powerful shall that of the bishop and the whole Church be!” Ep. ad Magnes. c. 7. “Wherefore come ye altogether as unto one temple of God; as to one altar [*θυσιαστήριον*], as to one Jesus Christ.”—Wake’s translation. Cf. Epist. ad Trall. c. 7, &c. Vid. Note, Appendix.

² “This place of Scripture . . . was once, and that in the eldest and purest times of the Church, a text of eminent note, and familiarly known to every Christian, being alleged by

their pastors and teachers, as an express and undoubted prophecy of the Christian Sacrifice or solemn worship in the Eucharist, taught by our Blessed Saviour unto His disciples to be observed of all that should believe in His name: and this so generally and grantedly, as could never have been, at least so early, unless they had learned thus to apply it by tradition from the Apostles.

“For in the age immediately succeeding them, . . . we find it alleged to this purpose by Justin Martyr and Irenæus, the pillars of that age; the former of them flourishing within little more than thirty years after the death of St. John, and the latter a disciple of Polycarp, St. John’s scholar.” —Mede’s Works, p. 355.

shall be offered unto my name, and *a pure offering* : for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts³.” And again, having foretold the coming of the great Angel of the covenant to His temple, the same prophet declares concerning Him,—“he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver : and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years⁴.”

But the peaceful scene of pure and holy worship⁵ represented in the vision before us, was soon to change, and troubles and warfare to follow. “The angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it to⁶ the earth ; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” We are here reminded of the imagery in a vision of the prophet Ezekiel, to which we have already had occasion to refer. I allude to that symbolic description of the vengeance to be inflicted on Jerusalem by the arms of the Chaldeans, in the vision in which the prophet saw six men, each with a slaughter weapon in his hand, who “came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north,”—the direction in which Babylon lay,—“and went in and stood beside the brazen altar ;” and one among them “clothed with linen, with a writer’s inkhorn by his side,” who was bidden first to go through the city,

³ Mal. i. 10, 11.

⁴ Mal. iii. 3, 4.

⁵ Mede, p. 362, quoting, *inter alios*, Clemens Alexand. lib. 7. Stromat.—Ἡ θυσία τῆς ἐκκλησίας λόγος ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τῶν

ἀγίων ψυχῶν ἀναθυμιώμενος . . . “He speaks not of the private prayer of every Christian, but of the public prayer of the Church as a body,” &c.

⁶ Marg. E. V.

and set a mark upon the foreheads of the faithful remnant, before those other ministers of destruction were to go forth and slay in the sanctuary and in the city. I referred to this passage, in the last Lecture⁷, in illustration of the description given by St. John of the angel sealing the chosen remnant of Israel before they “to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea” were suffered to execute their commission. And the two passages will appear the more closely parallel when it is observed, that though, in the seventh chapter, we read of “the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,” yet when, in the chapter before us, four angels have sounded, the first of whom inflicts judgments upon the earth, and the second upon the sea, two more trumpets succeed, following on those four; the six angels thus appearing for their work of vengeance, like the six armed men in the prophet’s vision. And when at length the seventh angel sounds, a scene is opened, in the further unfolding of which we are reminded of the sequel of Ezekiel’s vision, and of the agency there described of the seventh of that company whom he saw, namely, the man clothed with linen.

For, having first described the slaughter made in the city by the six armed men, the prophet tells us of the seventh,—“the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side,”—that he re-appeared before the presence of the Divine glory, and reported the execution of the commission given him, saying, “I have done as thou hast commanded me.” “Then I looked,” says the prophet, “and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims

⁷ Vid. sup. p. 241.

there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne. And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight. . . . And it came to pass that when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims; then he went in, and stood beside the wheels. And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that was between the cherubims, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen: who took it, and went out⁸.” If now we turn to the Revelation, we find the sounding of the seventh angel followed immediately by the announcement of a fuller manifestation of that supreme Sovereignty and dominion which, as I have already endeavoured to show, was symbolically represented by the living creatures, or cherubim. “The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever*. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and *hast reigned*⁹.” And then immediately afterwards is disclosed the view of that ark of the covenant which, as we have seen, with its over-

⁸ Ezek. ix. 11; x. 1—7.

⁹ Rev. xi. 15—17.

shadowing cherubim, represented the throne of the Divine Majesty. "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple *the ark of his testament*: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail¹."

The vision here breaks off; but we find it renewed and continued, the same scenery re-appearing, where, in the fifteenth chapter, St. John proceeds to describe the pouring out of the seven last plagues. "After that," he says, "I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four living creatures"—the same, as we have before seen, with the cherubim in Ezekiel's vision—"gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever²." Here, then, the vials of wrath, as there the burning coals of fire,—both alike the symbol of judgments proceeding from the throne of God,—are given by one of the four living creatures into the hand of those whose immediate agency is employed in the execution of vengeance. And the seven angels "clothed in pure and white linen," to whom is given the infliction of the last plagues,—those plagues in which "is *filled up* the wrath of God,"—seem to correspond with the "man clothed with linen" in Ezekiel's vision, by whose agency is completed that work of destruction which the slaughter-weapons of the six armed men had begun³. For the sword of the warrior was not

¹ Ver. 19.² Chap. xv. 5—7.³ Cf. sup. pp. 174, 175.

the only weapon which was to be brought forth from the armoury of the Almighty for the punishment of Jerusalem: together with the sword were threatened also the visitations of the famine and the pestilence. In a prophecy preceding this vision, it had been declared that a third part of Jerusalem should die with the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in the midst of her; while a third part should fall by the sword round about her; and a third part be scattered into all the winds, and a sword be drawn out after them. Then, and not till then, would the "anger" of the Almighty "be accomplished," when He had caused His "fury to rest upon them," and had executed judgments in Jerusalem "in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes;" by "the evil arrows of famine," by "pestilence and blood⁴."

It would sufficiently appear, from the expressions already cited, in which the seven vials are spoken of as "the last plagues,"—the plagues in which "is filled up the wrath of God⁵,"—that they are to be regarded as the *full* accomplishment of vengeance already *in part* poured out. But further, that they are the completion of the judgments contained under the earlier trumpets, seems clear, I think, from a comparison of the trumpets with the vials. And it is of great importance to determine the relation of these, in order to obtain a satisfactory solution of the question whether the vision immediately before us,—that of the six trumpets,—is intended to represent assaults made upon the Church by her enemies, and which were to be avenged under the corresponding vials, or whether it describe judgments of God upon the earth, whether Pagan

⁴ Ezek. v. 12—17.

⁵ Rev. xv. 1.

or Christian, inflicted in the progress of the Church's warfare, and to be accomplished in the vengeance poured out in its full measure toward the close of her eventful history. By some commentators not only have the seven trumpets been regarded as containing the same history with the seven seals, only drawn out in fuller detail, but the seven vials also have been supposed to synchronize with the seven trumpets, and to predict the same events. With regard to the relation in which the seals and the trumpets stand to each other, I have already endeavoured to show, that the latter do not synchronize with, but succeed, the former; and as the opening of the seventh seal reveals at once the seven angels ready to sound the seven trumpets, so in like manner, it would appear, the sounding of the seventh trumpet discloses, from the opening of the inner sanctuary, the seven angels coming forth with the seven vials. Thus is the vision continually unfolding.

And on comparing the six trumpets with the six vials—the seventh, in each case, as is evident from what has been said, being the opening into a further scene—we find a close correspondence throughout, in regard to the object on which judgment is inflicted, partially under the trumpet, plenarily under the vial. Thus, the first trumpet and the first vial, alike, have reference to “the earth;” but under the former, the plague inflicted is *partial*; under the latter, it is *general*, as well as more grievous. “The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up⁶.” If we turn

⁶ Chap. viii. 7.

now to the description of the angels with the seven vials, we read, "the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image⁷." It was the *earth* that was, in each case, though in different degrees, the object of vengeance. So again the second trumpet and the second vial both fell upon the *sea*. "The second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed⁸." But when "the second angel" of the *vials* "poured out his vial upon the sea," we are told, "it became as the blood of a dead man: and *every living soul* died in the sea⁹." Again, under the trumpets, "the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." "But when the third angel poured out his *vial* upon the rivers and fountains of waters," "they"—the whole of them—"became blood. And I heard," says St. John, "the angel of the waters, say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I

⁷ Chap. xvi. 2.⁸ Chap. viii. 8, 9.⁹ Chap. xvi. 3.

heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments¹.” Once more, under the fourth trumpet we read, “the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise².” But when the fourth *vial* was poured out upon the sun, we are told, “power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory³.” In the fifth and sixth, severally, of the trumpets and the vials, compared together, we may trace the like connexion; most clearly marked in the latter case, where, the sixth trumpet having described the army of horsemen from “the great river Euphrates⁴,” the sixth vial was poured out “upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared⁵.”

But it is to the first four trumpets that I would, in the first instance, confine your attention, inasmuch as these, when taken together, seem to form, in some sense, a whole; being separated from those which follow by the description, which is introduced immediately after the fourth trumpet, of the angel whom St. John “heard, flying through the midst of heaven”—or rather, in the mid space between heaven and earth⁶—“saying, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet

¹ Chap. xvi. 10, 11.

² Chap. viii. 12.

³ Chap. xvi. 8, 9.

⁴ Chap. ix. 14.

⁵ Chap. xvi. 12.

⁶ ἐν μεσουρανήματι.

to sound⁷.” The four preceding, thus separated from the three remaining, had fallen severally, as we have seen, upon the earth,—or rather, the land,—and the sea, the rivers and fountains of water, and the lights of heaven. And this fourfold division seems elsewhere used to include the whole creation, or, at least, the whole system within the view of the prophetic Spirit. In the fourteenth chapter St. John tells us he “saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made *heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters*⁸.” The four first trumpets, then, taken together, would seem to describe judgments, of various kinds, affecting, universally, within the limits assigned to them, that whole system, or world, on which they fell. And this part of the Apocalyptic vision the majority of modern commentators, following herein the learned Mede, have understood as referring to the calamities which overwhelmed the Roman Empire in its later days. In applying, however, the several symbols, they have perhaps endeavoured too accurately to trace, in chronological order, the successive stages of the Empire’s fall; discovering, for instance, in the first trumpet the irruptions of Alaric and the Goths; in the second, of Attila and the Huns; in the third, of Genseric and the Vandals; in the fourth, of Odoacer and the Heruli, who, towards the end of the fifth century, put an end to the very name of

⁷ Chap. viii. 13.

⁸ Chap. xiv. 6, 7.

the Western Empire. But, independently of the question whether some of the symbols could, according to the strict analogy of prophetic language, be so interpreted, the fourfold division already mentioned, together with the variety of imagery employed, would rather seem to suggest a wider and more comprehensive application.

We must first, however, consider the question whether it be upon the Roman world, or upon the Christian Church, that the calamities and sufferings, which are here described, are to be regarded as inflicted. Dean Woodhouse inclines to the opinion that it is "*the pure Christian Church*" that "is the object of attack throughout the trumpets;" and this on the great principle, "that the Christian Church in general is the main object of the Apocalyptic, and indeed of all Divine, prophecy⁹." But this would equally be the case,—the Church would equally be the main object of the prophecy,—whether we beheld her suffering at the hands of her enemies, or her cause advancing amidst judgments on the earth which, while they constituted *her* trial, were the destruction of her foes. It is, however, argued further, that, "in those visions of the trumpets whose meaning can be most accurately ascertained, the Christian Church is evidently the object of assault;" that "such it is seen to be in the fifth and sixth trumpets, and yet more clearly and confessedly in the seventh; where (in chap. xi. ver. 15), upon the angel's sounding, the heavenly voices immediately proclaim the victory, and award the kingdoms of the world to Christ¹." With regard, however, to these three trumpets I would

⁹ Annotations, pp. 173, 174.

¹ Ibid. p. 174.

observe, that they are all three ushered in, as we have already seen, with a “woe to the inhabitants of the earth;” and since one of them, the seventh, awakens loud voices of joy in heaven, it must be on the earth and its inhabitants, and not on the pure Christian Church, as such, that, in this instance at least, warfare is proclaimed. As regards the fifth trumpet, the subjects of its plague are expressly defined: the army of locusts was not to hurt “the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, nor any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads²;” therefore even here it is not the pure Christian Church that suffers; and if the sixth seal is rightly interpreted by the general consent of modern expositors as referring to the conquests of Mahometan powers in the East, these also may be regarded primarily as plagues sent on the earth; although, indeed, it was on a part of the Christian world, and of the heritage of the Christian Church, that the vengeance fell.

It is argued, however, still further, from the description preparatory to the sounding of the seven trumpets, that the casting of the fire from the altar to the earth implies “not merely the just judgments of God on a guilty world, but their connexion with the Christian religion³.” The fire, it is observed, is taken, not, as in Ezekiel’s vision, from the throne, but from the altar; which would seem to denote the Christian religion sent down to earth, and “mingling with human corruptions,” with “the passions and worldly projects of sinful men,” and so becoming “the instrument of discord and violence,” “producing signal commotions, expressed in pro-

² Chap. ix. 4.

³ Woodhouse, p. 172.

phetical language by ‘voices, thunderings, lightnings, earthquake⁴.’” The expression here used, of the angel casting the censer full of fire on the earth⁵, is precisely the same with those words of our Blessed Lord, “I am come to send”—or more literally, “to cast—fire on the earth⁶.” But this, it must be remembered, would not imply necessarily any corruption of His pure and holy doctrine: it would foretel only a conflict with the world into which it was to be sent; causing dissension and division not primarily *amongst* His own disciples, but *against* them on the part of an evil world. Consistently with our interpretation, we may freely admit, that the fire being taken from the altar would imply that the judgments on the earth, represented under that imagery, were connected with the Christian religion; for indeed it was that pure and heavenly religion which, coming on earth, and encountering there the wrath of man, kindled against it persecution at the hands first of the Jew and then of the Gentile, and thereby involved Judaism and Paganism, the whole world of the Roman Empire, in the heavy judgments inflicted upon it by the wrath of God. And there is no defect in the parallel between the vision before us and that of Ezekiel; for it is to be remarked, that it was from beside the brazen altar⁷, not from the throne, that those first commissioned agents of vengeance were sent, whose ministry seems to correspond with that of the six angels of the trumpets in St. John’s vision.

If, then, from the arguments which have now been adduced, we may venture to conclude, that by the

⁴ Woodhouse, pp. 170, 171. βαλεῖν εἰς τὴν γῆν.

⁵ ἔβαλεν εἰς τὴν γῆν.

⁷ Ezek. ix. 2.

⁶ Luke xii. 49. Πῦρ ἦλθον

first four trumpets are described those Divine judgments upon the world which attended the introduction and establishment of Christianity, it remains to enquire into the particular application of the several symbols employed. But under these first four trumpets, as Dean Woodhouse truly observes, "the description is so very short, the symbols of so general a character, so rapidly shown and passed over, that it seems difficult to collect from them particular and specific information⁸." The first trumpet, as we have seen, was upon the land; the second, upon the sea. But, "in the writings of the prophets," as the same writer remarks, "'the land,' as opposed to 'the sea,' frequently signifies the holy land, the people of Israel; while the Gentiles, especially those of the west, are spoken of by the word 'sea'.⁹" And it was upon the people of Israel that the first storm of vengeance fell: judgment "began at" God's ancient "sanctuary¹." It may also be remarked that, while, under the first trumpet, in the description of judgments poured upon the earth, mention is made, specially, of "the third part of the trees" being burnt up, and all "green grass," it had formed part of the prohibition laid upon the angelic ministers of vengeance, until the remnant of Israel had been sealed, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, *nor the trees*." And, in the prophet Ezekiel, we find the former destruction of Jerusalem threatened under the image of a fire kindled in the forest, which should "devour every

⁸ Annotations, p. 174.

⁹ Ibid. p. 175. He refers to "Isa. xxiv. *passim*; xlii. 4; lx. 5, compared with Matt. xii. 21; Gen. x. 5; Ps. lxxv. 5;

Ezek. xxvi. 15, 16."

¹ Ezek. ix. 6. Comp. 1 Pet. iv. 17. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."

green tree in" it, "and every dry tree²." In the description, on the other hand, contained under the second trumpet, of "a great mountain burning with fire," which "was cast into the sea³," we are reminded of the denunciation on Babylon pronounced by the prophet Jeremiah, "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain⁴." And if by the "sea" we are to understand, in prophetic language, the Gentiles, "the nations beyond the pale of the Jewish Church⁵," the imagery employed under this trumpet may well describe the destruction brought upon the Pagan world while, during the three first centuries, as has been observed in reference to the description before us, "the idolatrous power was consuming away, from the fire inflicted upon it from above, from the altar of true religion in heaven⁶."

The imagery, under the third trumpet, of the star which fell from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, which fell upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and turned them to bitterness⁷, would seem properly to describe, as some have interpreted it, corruption

² Ezek. xx. 47. Compare Luke xxiii. 31, which passage also has reference to the calamities to be brought on Jerusalem and the people of the Jews. Compare also Zech. xi. 1, 2. The order of the vision seems to require (cf. sup. Lect. viii.) that the date assigned to this trumpet, thus interpreted, should be that of the *final* vengeance executed on the Jews, in Judæa and elsewhere, in the

times of Trajan and Adrian.

³ Rev. viii. 8.

⁴ Jer. li. 25.

⁵ Woodhouse, p. 177.

⁶ Ibid. p. 178. "The Gentile converts," however, it will be recollected, are, according to Dean Woodhouse's interpretation, the subject of this visitation, as "the *Christian* Israelites" are of the preceding.

⁷ Chap. viii. 10, 11.

of “the streams and sources of pure doctrine,” rather than the outward calamities caused by any barbarian conqueror; unless we are to take into account also—what has been pointed out as aggravating the woes inflicted by the Arian Vandals—that there was in their case false doctrine also, causing bitter persecution. If by the star falling from heaven we are to understand a leader of false doctrine, remembering how, in the early ages, the corrupted philosophy of the Greeks was regarded as the chief source and spring of those waters of bitterness which destroyed the spiritual life of men⁸, we may perhaps interpret this trumpet of the fall from heaven of that which had been the guide of life to the heathen, and the poisoning of those fresh springs and living streams which had cheered the wilderness of the heathen world. And lastly, under the fourth trumpet, the darkening of the third part of the lights of heaven, the sun, and the moon, and the stars⁹, may describe, as has been supposed by the majority of commentators, the fall of the Roman empire; the imagery being similar to that in which the prophets had spoken of the fall of mighty kingdoms in old time. Thus, for instance, Isaiah prophesies of the destruction of Babylon, “The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will

⁸ Tertull. de Præscript. Hæret. cap. 6. “Ipsæ denique hæreses à philosophiâ subornantur. Inde æones et formæ nescio quæ, et trinitas hominis apud Valentinum: Platonius fuerat. Inde Marcionis Deus melior de tranquillitate; à Stoicis venerat.

Et ut anima interire dicatur, ab Epicureis observatur. . . . Et ubi materia cum Deo æquatur, Zenonis disciplina est. . . . Eadem materiæ apud hæreticos et philosophos volutantur, iidem retractatus implicantur.”

⁹ Chap. viii. 12.

punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity ; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible ¹.” And in like manner Ezekiel, in his lamentation for the fall of Egypt, “ When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark ; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God ².”

But whatever interpretation we are disposed to adopt in regard to these first four trumpets, I would repeat the observation already made, that here, as elsewhere, the four, taken together, seem to constitute a whole ; the fourfold division, as we have seen, of “ heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters,” occurring elsewhere in the book of Revelation ; the first four trumpets, moreover, being marked off from those which follow by the proclamation of the angel thrice denouncing “ woe to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which were yet to sound.”

Of these three later trumpets it remains at present only to consider the fifth and the sixth ; leaving for future inquiry the intermediate vision which occupies the tenth chapter, and the greater part of the eleventh ; and which declares the completion of the second woe, preparatory to the long delayed sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the sevenfold judgments which, in the seven vials, are contained under that trumpet.

¹ Isa. xiii. 10, 11.

² Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8.

The fifth and sixth trumpets have, by the majority of expositors since the time of Mede, been interpreted, respectively, of the assaults of the Saracens and of the Turks upon Eastern Christendom. The interpretation of the sixth trumpet,—that of the Euphratean horsemen,—as describing hostile invasion from that quarter, may be considered to have the general consent of modern expositors. With regard, however, to the fifth—that of the scorpion locusts,—arguments have been adduced, which seem to have much force, in support of a somewhat different interpretation. It has been observed that whereas, in the sixth trumpet, they are literal horses and horsemen that are described,—(though even there, perhaps, there is room for a caution against too literal or physical an interpretation,)—here, under the fifth trumpet, it is but the *appearance* as “of horses prepared unto battle” that the army of locusts assumes. And the imagery seems to be throughout descriptive, specially, of a spiritual warfare. “I saw,” says St. John, “a star fall from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, and to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power³.” The language here employed may remind us of that which our Blessed Lord used when He said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and *scorpions*, and

³ Chap. ix. 1—3.

over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you⁴.” For though, elsewhere, stars are used to denote earthly leaders of the spiritual host,—the Angels of the Churches,—here, it would seem, is described rather that fallen star, “Lucifer, son of the morning⁵,” the chief prince and leader of “the rulers of the darkness of this world,” the great author and worker of “spiritual wickedness in high places⁶.” For it is said more explicitly, in a subsequent verse, concerning this army of locusts, “They had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon⁷.”

And—what is especially worthy of remark—their commission is expressly limited to those who are not of the sealed remnant. “It was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, nor any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads⁸.” Whence it has been inferred, that “these assailants do not injure the Church by force of arms; for then, how could the sealed escape?” “When a conquering and ferocious army,” it is observed, “overruns a country with fire and sword, the sealed, the faithful and acknowledged servants of God, undergo their share of the common calamity, alleviated, indeed, in their case by His Divine providence, but not entirely removed. But from the contamination of a pestilential heresy they might, and would, be secure; their principles and practice,

⁴ Luke x. 18, 19.

⁵ Isa. xiv. 12. Comp. Job xxxviii. 7.

⁶ Eph. vi. 12.

⁷ Rev. ix. 11.

⁸ Ver. 4.

and the seal of God, would save them⁹.” And herein, it is to be observed, is a marked distinction between this trumpet, emphatically ushered in by a “woe,” and those four preceding. *They* were general, and indiscriminate;—under the first trumpet, as we saw, “the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up;” *here*, these remain unhurt; the plague is upon those, and those only, “which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.” And the description which is here given, as it would seem, of spiritual assault and the protection against it, may remind us of the warning which St. Paul, writing to Timothy, delivers against the “profane and vain babblings” which would “increase unto more ungodliness,” in them whose word would “eat as doth a canker: of whom,” he says, “are Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless,” he continues, “the foundation of God standeth sure, having this *seal*, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity¹.” A trial like that which the Apostle foresaw, as coming on them who had not this divinely imprinted seal, seems to be shadowed out in the prophetic imagery, in the vision before us, of the plague of locusts: it was not the outward persecution inflicting death on the body, but an inward plague restlessly tormenting the spirit. “And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the

⁹ Woodhouse, p. 193. The ancient interpreters generally understand this trumpet as hav-

ing reference to heresies.

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 16—19.

torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them².”

This description seems to mark clearly the character of the assaults here spoken of; and, in the records of the early Church, we find heresies designated in language very similar. “Tertullian, in his treatise entitled ‘Scorpiace,’” as Dean Woodhouse observes, “directly compares the Valentinians, and other Gnostic teachers, to scorpions³”; and “Epiphanius, quoting from Irenæus, says that” these heresies “burst out of the earth together at one time like mushrooms, the lurking places of many scorpions⁴.” “The ancient writers of the Church, and Eusebius her prime historian,” as the same expositor further remarks, “ascribe the introduction of” these early systems of error “to the agency of the Devil; who having, as he says, attempted in vain to overthrow the Church by persecution external, attacked it internally by his agents,—by professed Christians,—leading some of the faithful to the deep of de-

² Vv. 5, 6. Vincentius Lirinensis thus describes the effects of heresies on the unstable among professing Christians—“alii vero tantummodo excussi, et perire metuunt, et redire erubescunt saucii, semineces ac semivivi; quippe qui tantam veneni hauserint quantitatem quæ *nec occidat nec digeratur, nec mori cogat, nec vivere sinat*. Heu miseranda conditio! quantis curarum æstibus, quantis turbinibus exagitantur! . . . incerti qua eant, qua redeant, quid adpetant, quid fugiant, quid teneant, quid dimittant.”

Commonit. cap. 20.

³ Annotations, p. 198. Cf. Hieron. adv. Vigilant. (Op. t. iv. pars ii. p. 285.) “Scribit adversum hæresin tuam, quæ olim erupit contra Ecclesiam, (ne et in hoc quasi repertor novi sceleris glorieris,) Tertullianus, vir eruditissimus, insigne volumen, quod Scorpiacum vocat rectissimo nomine; quia arcuato vulnere in Ecclesiæ corpus venena diffundit.” Vid. Tertull. ed. Rigalt. p. 487.

⁴ Contr. Hæres. lib. i. c. 31. Woodhouse, p. 194.

struction, εἰς βυθὸν ἀπωλείας ; in which expressions," it is observed, "there is a remarkable coincidence with the origin of this woe, as stated in the prophecy, 'the pit of the bottomless deep,' and likewise with the name of its leader Apollyon," the Destroyer. "He represents, moreover, this attack as a warlike invasion, . . . which agrees with the description before us, and with the alarm sounded by the trumpet⁵." "The shapes of the locusts," says St. John, "were like unto horses prepared unto battle ; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold⁶," counterfeits of those which the elders wore whom St. John beheld in the spiritual temple⁷. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel ; for Satan himself"—their prince and leader—"is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness⁸." "And their faces were as the faces of men ;" having the semblance of humanity and reason. "And they had hair as the hair of women ;" ensnaring with the apparent beauty and softness of their doctrines, but alluring only to destroy :—for "their teeth were as the teeth of lions." "And they had breastplates as it were breastplates of iron,"—well armed, to all appearance, for warfare ; "and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails ;"—

⁵ Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. 7. Woodhouse, p. 196, who adds, "Justin Martyr is also represented by the same historian as ascribing this invasion to dia-

bolical operation (lib. iii. c. 26)."

⁶ Ver. 7.

⁷ Chap. iv. 4.

⁸ 2 Cor. xi. 13—15.

doctrines as of “the prophet which speaketh lies⁹,” the wisdom which descendeth not from above, but is “earthly, sensual, devilish¹.” “And their power was to hurt men five months.”

The duration of this plague is thus again, as once before, expressly defined; but whether the period here spoken of be, as some have supposed, “in allusion to the time during which natural locusts commit their devastations, and after which they die,” or whether it is to be interpreted by numbering each day as a year, is a question which will come, generally, under our consideration in connexion with the vision next in order to be examined. I may mention, however, that Dean Woodhouse has endeavoured to show, that the first swarm of heresies which infested the early Church lasted, “*as a prevailing heresy and pestilential swarm* (for,” he adds, “it is in that view only that, consistently with the symbols, we are to consider them) about one hundred and fifty years² ;” —that is, five prophetic months, counting a day for a year; and then they disappeared utterly from the Christian world. So entirely, indeed, have they vanished, that the record of them remains on the page of early history only to excite astonishment that they should ever have spread themselves and prevailed as once they did. It is the judgment, meanwhile, of a writer distinguished not less by solid learning than by deep thought, that this, which was “the first³,” was also “perhaps, indirectly, the most

⁹ Isa. ix. 15, “the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.”

¹ James iii. 15.

² Annotations, p. 195. Dean Woodhouse there refers to a long note, well worth consulting, in his former work, “The

Apocalypse translated,” p. 239. Compare pp. 228—252.

³ This circumstance is to be specially borne in mind, in favour of the interpretation here adopted. See Note, Appendix.

enduring perversion of the truth as it is in Jesus;" arising, as it did, out of "that perplexity as to the origin of evil, which, from the very earliest ages, exercised the intellects of man." "The fervour of oriental fancy," he observes, "had, from an early period, not only accepted the doctrine of two principles; but had exhibited that doctrine in a variety of details, fanciful and minute beyond conception. It was in the fatal school of Egypt, ever the nursing mother of superstition and heresy, that these oriental tenets had been engrafted on some, or, perhaps, on all the systems of Greek philosophy; and that a still stranger union was brought about between this compound and the Mosaic revelation⁴." "Divided among themselves," indeed, as the same able writer observes, the Gnostics "failed to do all the harm to Christianity which might have been expected: but there is sufficient reason," he continues, "to lament the mischief effected by the swarm of heresies"—he is writing, I would observe, with no reference to the passage before us, or to the book of Revelation at all—"the swarm of heresies⁵ which arose from the bosom of Gnosticism, and which spread themselves through all the churches of Asia and Africa,—bringing in their train, now the most debasing superstitions, and now the most extravagant excesses of ascetic rigour." "It is the express testimony," he further observes, "of S. Irenæus and of Justin Martyr, that very many of the heathens were unable to distinguish between the true and the false members of the Christian body; and were thus taught,

⁴ [See Burton's Bampton Lectures, Lect. ii. and iii.]

⁵ [Cf. Bruckeri Hist. Crit. Philos. t. ii. p. 639 (quoted by Woodhouse, p. 197,)—"ex-

orta esse illa hæresium *examina*, quæ, Gnosticorum nomine superbientia, muscarum instar, per omnes Asiæ atque Africæ ecclesias pervolitarunt . . ."]

by the just hatred which they had conceived for the falsehoods and abominations of the Gnostics⁶, to turn away from the truths of the Gospel. We have it also from unquestionable authorities, that the fanatical eloquence, the learning, and the show of piety, among the Gnostics, were effectual means of seducing but too large a portion of Christians, unable to combat the sophistry, or to detect the falsehood, which lurked under these disguises⁷."

If, however, it was this first great assault of heresy on the Church to which we may specially refer the imagery of the fifth trumpet, we may perhaps regard it as containing, at the same time,—if only the period marked in it be not taken definitely,—a delineation of other plagues of the like kind which afflicted the Christian world in the early ages. In particular, we might mention the Arian heresy, in its various forms, its restlessly tormenting attacks, and its cruel persecutions, as answering, in many points, to the description before us. Heretical systems, the offspring of a too subtle and unsubdued intellect, were, in fact, the great sin and trial of Eastern Christendom; and tended, by the divisions which they created, to prepare the way⁸, and give an easy conquest to that "Arch-heresy," as it has been fitly designated,—(and, indeed, it was of heresies such as the Arian that Mahometanism was the genuine progeny⁹,)—which was the scourge, in the

⁶ Matter, *Hist. Univ.* vol. i. p. 166, (quoted by Rose, *vid. inf.*) See Note, Appendix.

⁷ Rose's "Christianity always progressive," pp. 40—42, with Notes and Illustrations, there referred to, pp. 155—160.

⁸ Sale's *Koran*, Prelim. Disc. Sect. 2. Prideaux's *Life of*

Mahomet, &c.

⁹ "The doctrines reputed orthodox in the Mahometan religion are chiefly compounded from the Christian heresies." Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, vol. i. pp. 385, 386. (Compare sections vi. and ix.)

hand of the Almighty, to punish multiplied transgressions and deep corruption.

I have already observed that, in regard to the interpretation of the sixth trumpet as describing the invasions of Mahometan armies, there is that general consent of modern expositors that it is the less necessary to enter upon a distinct consideration of it. Those who, following Mede, have applied the preceding trumpet to the Saracens, have interpreted this exclusively of the Turks: Dean Woodhouse, while he regards its symbols as "more strictly applicable to the first irruption of Mahomet and his Saracens," is of opinion that they "may not unfitly be so applied as to comprehend them all." The imagery in several points resembles that of the preceding trumpet; and seems to describe not merely the assault of armies, but, at the same time, that more fearful one, of corrupt and blasphemous doctrine. The voice which gave the command to loose the four angels who were to lead the army commissioned for slaughter, was heard "from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God;" and the sound of the trumpet containing such a decree, and preceded by a denunciation of "woe," would seem to bespeak the wrath of God kindling for offences concerning His own worship, and bringing "a severe visitation on His people of the Christian Church¹." And undoubtedly the great triumph which the Mahometan power obtained over a large portion of Asia and Africa, and at length in the conquest of the European capital of Eastern Christendom, spoke loudly to the Christian Church of judgment inflicted for transgression, and was a call to the nations that

¹ Woodhouse, Annot. pp. 209, 210.

escaped—even “the residue of the men that were not killed by these plagues²”—to repent of the various corruptions in worship, in doctrine, and in life, which might bring down upon them the like visitation.

It is the general opinion of commentators that, in the following chapter, in the distinct vision which is interposed, before the second woe of the sixth trumpet is declared to be “past” and the seventh trumpet sounds, there is a transition to another scene—Western Christendom being there mainly concerned. If this hypothesis be correct, the vision of the six trumpets, as contained in the eighth and ninth chapters, having, under the first four trumpets, described the judgments which, in the first ages of the Church’s warfare, fell on the world that then was,—on the Jew and the Gentile, the wisdom of Greece and the power of Rome,—the two woe trumpets that follow would depict the sufferings and calamities, which, whether in the way of spiritual, or of outward and visible warfare, marked the course of the Church’s history; until one half, as it were, of her heritage became the possession of the enemy, and the capture of that city which had been so long the capital of Eastern Christendom, brings to its consummation, in the view of the secular historian, the fall of the Roman Empire³.

But if it be indeed, as I have endeavoured to show, that the vision of wrath revealed in the trumpets is completed only in that of the vials; and if it be also true, as is generally supposed, that this later vision is, at all events, but in course of fulfilment; we may well be content if some obscurity hang over

² Chap. ix. 20.

³ Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*, chap. 68.

scenes which are not yet fully unfolded, or which, though they be of past events, may be awaiting clearer light to be cast upon them by things yet to come. We shall be found meanwhile, in the spirit of true wisdom, humbly submitting ourselves to that uniform rule and law of Divine Revelation, which discloses to us of the present and the future only enough to lead us to watch for the signs of the Providential hand, as the course of time makes them gradually more and more visible. Sacred Prophecy,—it cannot be too deeply impressed upon our minds as we proceed in the investigation of it from step to step,—is to be regarded not merely as affording, in its fulfilment, an evidence to Religion, but also as an exercise of patient faith in Him whose Almighty Power and Wisdom we may trace, though it were but dimly, working out the designs of His mercy towards His Church on earth. If the vision be not made “plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it,” this may be because it “is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak and not lie;” and in the mean time, alike, and in the end “the just shall live by his faith ⁴.”

⁴ Habak. ii. 2—4.

LECTURE X.¹

REV. xi. 3, 4.

“ And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”

THE portion of Apocalyptic prophecy upon which we are now to enter, forms, as it were, a distinct scene, or episode, in the vision of which it is part, and is introduced by circumstances of peculiar solemnity.

Of the seven angels who, in the vision of the mystic temple, “stood before God,” and to whom “were given seven trumpets,” six had now sounded; the first four, as has already been observed, being separated from those which followed, by the voice that was heard of the “angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound ²!” Of these three, who also are thus connected together, “the fifth angel sounded,” and there followed the plague of the

¹ Preached Dec. 1, 1844.

² Rev. viii. 13.

scorpion locusts; and when this had lasted its appointed time, it was declared, "One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter³." The sixth angel sounded, and there was revealed the plague of the horsemen of the Euphrates; but no such declaration follows concerning the termination of the second woe: a new vision, meanwhile, as it would appear, is introduced in the tenth chapter, by a fresh revelation from heaven; and it is not till the end of the description, which follows in the eleventh chapter, of the prophetic ministry of the two witnesses, that we are told, "The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly⁴."

This distinct portion, then, of the vision, including the angelic appearance which ushers it in, occupies the whole of the tenth chapter, and the first fourteen verses of the eleventh. "I saw," says St. John, "another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:"—a description of glory so closely resembling that of the Divine Presence in the book of Ezekiel⁵, and of the appearance of the Son of Man in the opening of St. John's vision⁶, that some have thought it could be no created angel that is described here, but the Divine Angel Himself, "the Messenger of the Covenant."—"And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, the⁷ seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered

³ Chap. ix. 12.

⁴ Chap. xi. 14.

⁵ Comp. Ezek. i. 27, 28.

⁶ Chap. i. 16.

⁷ αἱ ἑπτὰ βρονταί.

their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets⁸."

The reference here cannot be mistaken, nor the parallel overlooked, to a description which we have already had before us, in the book of Daniel. The prophet, standing by the side of the great river Hiddekel, had beheld, on the waters of the river, an angelic form like that which St. John describes, "a man clothed in linen," whose "body was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude⁹." By the ministry of this mighty angel a prophecy was revealed to Daniel, which, it was made known to him, was yet "for many days¹;" and he was bidden accordingly to "shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end². Then I looked," saith the prophet, "and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was

⁸ Chap. x. 1—7.

⁹ Dan. x. 5, 6.

¹ Ver. 14.

² Dan. xii. 4.

upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard," saith the prophet, "the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished³." The resemblance between the two scenes, the solemn oath, the mention made in St. John's vision of the long looked-for accomplishment of the mystery of God, "declared" in ages past "to his servants the prophets,"—connect the two descriptions closely together. And the link will appear yet closer, when we find that the mystic period revealed in the vision which immediately follows in the Revelation of St. John—the forty and two months, or the thousand two hundred and threescore days—is the same with that which had been more obscurely shadowed out to Daniel under the designation of "a time, times, and an half," "a time and times and the dividing of times." The Jewish prophet had been charged to "shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end;" and when, hearing but understanding not the angel's mystic oath, he enquired again, saying, "O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" the angel said, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end⁴." But to the beloved disciple, the Evangelic prophet, the voices of the seven thunders uttered an intelligible sound; though, indeed, even he might not record the words, but must himself also, in his turn,

³ Dan. xii. 5—7.⁴ Vv. 8, 9.

seal them up. To him, nevertheless, the open book in the angel's hand was freely given, that he might spiritually digest that which it contained. "The voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go, and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings⁵."

The description here given will recall to mind that which we find in the book of Ezekiel, of the manner in which that prophet was charged with his sacred commission. The voice which came to him, from Him whom he saw amidst "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," enveloped in fire, and with brightness round about it, "as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain," bade him take and eat the roll of the book which an hand that was sent unto him spread before him; "and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe." "Then did I eat it," he says, "and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them⁶."

⁵ Rev. x. 8—11.

⁶ Ezek. ii. 9, 10; iii. 1—4.

The close resemblance of these passages of the elder prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, to the vision before us is highly important, as determining the character of the scene described in this tenth chapter. It would seem to show plainly, that it represents the solemn delivery to St. John of this special portion of prophetic revelation; and can hardly be, as some modern expositors have regarded it, a part of the prophecy itself, a continuation, in chronological order, of the history of the Church, taking it up at the point to which it had been carried down, under the sixth trumpet, in the chapter preceding. The principal scene of action, it would appear, was to be no longer the East, as it had been thus far in the vision, but rather the West, the Gentile world; symbolically represented, here, as elsewhere, by "the sea" on which the angel is described as planting his *right* foot, while his left foot was on "the land;" and it was further declared to St. John, whose first commission had been to the churches of Asia, that he "must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

Thus far, then, we have a description of the manner in which the vision now to be unfolded was solemnly communicated to St. John. We may now enter upon the consideration of the vision itself.

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: [and the angel stood,] ⁷ saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein ⁸." The action here represented resembles that which we find in the visions of Ezekiel and

⁷ These words do not appear to form part of the genuine text; nor does the ellipsis create any real difficulty.

⁸ Chap. xi. 1.

Zechariah; and the commission thus given to St. John, including as it does not only the temple and the altar—the inner sanctuary and the altar court—but also the congregation of worshippers assembled there, must be taken to denote an exact survey of the state of Divine worship in the visible Church, in the times here described.

In order, however, to the better understanding of the vision before us, it is to be observed, that in the temple at Jerusalem were two courts: an inner one for the priests, where stood the altar of burnt-offerings; and an outer court for the congregation, where they assembled at the stated hours of worship. But when any one came to offer a distinct sacrifice for himself, he was permitted to enter the court of the priests, and advance as far as the altar, for the purpose of presenting his sacrifice before God, and laying his hand upon it⁹. Of these individual worshippers, then, an exact account was to be taken, while of the outer court it is said in the following verse, “But the court which is without the temple leave out,”—or, as it is in the original, “cast out¹,—and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread forty and two months².”

“They shall tread,”—for this, as has been correctly observed, would appear to be the proper rendering of the word here employed³, rather than that which we find in our Authorized Version, “tread

⁹ Knox's Remains, vol. i. p. 144. He refers to Fleury's "Manners of the Israelites" (translated by A. Clarke), p. 112, and to Lightfoot. [Temple Service, chap. vii. sect. 3.

Temple described, chap. 33. (Works, vol. i. pp. 924. 2026.) Cf. Lev. i. 3; iii. 2. 8.]

¹ ἐκβαλε ἔξω.

² Ver. 2.

³ πατήσουσι.

under foot.” It is the simple verb that is used here; not the compound⁴, which would be employed to denote trampling down or treading under foot; as we find it in that passage of the history of the Maccabees, where we read of “the sanctuary” being “trodden down and profaned⁵.” The verb *πατέω* seems to be used here, as elsewhere, of treading, as worshippers who frequent, the temple of the Lord: as where it is said, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, to those multitudes of the congregation of Israel whose offering of worship was so greatly polluted with idolatries and corruptions, “Who hath required this at your hands, to *tread* my courts⁶?” In earlier times of the Apocalyptic vision, as already described, a scene had been disclosed in which, as in the Jewish temple when the people were praying without at the time of solemn worship, amid deep “silence in heaven,” in the spiritual temple of the Christian Church, there was offered much incense, ascending with the prayers of all saints,—an acceptable sacrifice “in every place,” “a pure offering” from the one congregation of Christian worshippers, Jew and Gentile⁷. But now, in the vision before us, in contradistinction from those that worshipped in the court of the altar, the Gentiles,—that is, as it would seem, the Gentile nations collectively,—are

⁴ καταπατεῖν.

⁵ 1 Macc. iii. 45. cf. v. 51. chap. iv. 60.

⁶ Isa. i. 12. *πατεῖν τὴν αὐλὴν μου*. LXX. Vid. Woodhouse, who refers (Translation, p. 289, Note) to the comment of Arethas—*πύλιν ἁγίαν τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν ἐκάλεσεν, ἣν ἴσμεν πατεῖσθαι ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν, οἷς ἐδόθη οἶονεῖ ἐν αὐτῇ ἀναστρέφεισθαι, ὑπὸ μὲν Χριστιανῶν θεοφίλως,*

ὑπὸ δὲ ἀπίστων καταφρονητικῶς καὶ ὀλεθρίως. [Catena, &c. ed. Cramer, p. 337.] So Lightfoot, Harmony N. T. (*in loc.*) —“ ‘and they should tread the holy city.’ . . . Not in an hostile way, but as the flock of the Lord tread his courts, there worshipping him.” Works, vol. i. p. 345.

⁷ Cf. sup. pp. 255—259.

represented as having possession of the outer court and treading the holy city; admitted to its privileges, though not drawing near in holiest and purest worship. And this was to continue through a certain period of time, defined here as consisting of "forty and two months."

The mention thus made of an appointed time during which the Gentiles should tread the holy city, will at once remind us of that prophecy of our Blessed Lord in which, using the same word as in the passage before us, (and which must there also, it would rather appear, be rendered in the same way,) He says, after declaring how the Jewish people should fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive into all lands, "And Jerusalem shall be *trodden of the Gentiles*, until *the times of the Gentiles* be fulfilled ⁸." In the vision before us, in like manner,—though doubtless here, as indeed we may say there also, it is the *spiritual* "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," the Church of Christ, that is specially referred to, and not merely the earthly and typical,—we find "the holy city" spoken of as "given to the Gentiles to be trodden by them," and that for an appointed period, certain "times." And that these are the same "times of the Gentiles" spoken of by our Lord, will appear still further from the language of the book of Daniel, already quoted, where, in immediate connexion with the mention of "a time, times, and an half," it was added emphatically, "and *when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people*,"—that is, as it would

⁸ Luke xxi. 24. καὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἔσται πατουμένη ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν, ἄχρι πληρωθῶσι καιροὶ ἐθνῶν. Woodhouse (Transl. p. 289, Note) suggests it as a

question, whether this text should not be so translated, "and whether that prophecy does not belong to the same period as this."

appear, (primarily, at least,) the people of Israel which then were the people of God,—“all these things shall be finished.” Applying, therefore, to the visions of the elder and the later prophet,—of Daniel and St. John,—the light derived from the words of our Blessed Lord Himself, we are authorized to interpret the vision before us as unfolding the fulfilment of “the times of the Gentiles.” And we have now to consider what the period in question is.

It is described, in the words before cited from the verse immediately preceding the text, as consisting of “forty and two months.” The same period, it would seem, is marked in a subsequent vision, in the thirteenth chapter, as defining the continuance of the wild beast there described, to whom “power was given to continue,” or, as it may be otherwise rendered, “to practise⁹,” “forty and two months¹.” It would seem as if the like period were also described in other words when we read in the text, following immediately upon the verse which speaks of the Gentiles treading the holy city forty and two months, “And I will give unto my two witnesses, that they may prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth;”—twelve hundred and sixty days making up precisely the period of forty-two months; thirty days, according to the Hebrew reckoning, being computed to the month. And this period also, of twelve hundred and sixty days, is mentioned again in the following chapter, where we read of the woman fleeing “into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God that they should feed her there a thousand two hun-

⁹ ποιῆσαι. Comp. Dan. viii. 12, “and it practised (ועשתה) and prospered;” xi. 28, “and he shall do (exploits).”
¹ Chap. xiii. 5.

dred and threescore days².” And this again is identified with the more obscure language of Daniel’s vision, before referred to, concerning the “time, times, and a half,” when, in a later verse of the same chapter, St. John tells us, “to the woman were given two wings of the³ great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent⁴.” So that the three times, or years, and a half, (for so, it would appear, the word “time” is to be understood⁵,) will correspond with the period already described as “forty and two months,” or “a thousand two hundred and threescore days,”—three hundred and sixty days, or twelve months of thirty days each, being reckoned to the year.

We must now enter upon the much canvassed question, how these days and months and years are to be interpreted, whether literally, or mystically⁶. The consideration of this question has been deferred to the present occasion, because the vision before us,

² Chap. xii. 6.

³ τοῦ ἀετοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου. Cf. sup. p. 216.

⁴ Ver. 14.

⁵ The words in Dan. xii. 7, in the Hebrew, לְמוֹעֵד מוֹעֵדִים

וְחֻצִי would seem identical with the Chaldee עֲדָנָא וְעֲדָנִין וּפְלָג in chap. vii. 25. And in chap. iv. 16, 23, &c. (vv. 13, 20, &c. Heb.) the word עֲדָנִין seems undoubtedly to denote years. Comp. chap. xi. 13. וְלִקְצֵי הָעֵתִים שָׁנִים—“after cer-

tain years,” E. V. “Heb. at the end of times, even years.” Marg. See Wintle on Daniel (pp. 207, 208) for instances of a similar use of the words χρόνοι and “tempora.”

⁶ That a *definite*, and not an indefinite, period is denoted by these numbers, would rather appear from the mention, in the book of Daniel, of the two other periods of 1290 and 1335 days—which numbers do not seem to admit of being interpreted in reference to the times of Antiochus. Vid. Hieron, *in loc.*

I believe it will be found, supplies data not furnished in earlier prophecies for its right solution. But, before we enter upon the particular grounds of the argument, I would observe that the general impression derived from the examination, thus far, of the vision before us, compared with that of Daniel and with the prophecy of our Lord interpreting both, would certainly be in favour of a mode of interpretation which would give to the times here spoken of, a wider range than that of twelve hundred and sixty literal days, three literal years and a half.

To proceed, however, to the general question; and first, as regards the evidence of Scripture, I would observe, that the primary argument for the interpretation which, since the time of Mede, has been commonly received amongst us, taking a *day* as used in prophetic language to signify a *year*, is derived from the well-known prophecy, in Daniel, of the seventy weeks. For, whatever difficulty, or diversity of opinion, has been found in regard to the exact computation of these weeks, the almost unanimous consent of the Christian world has recognized in that prophecy, interpreted as denoting by a week a period of seven years,—or, as it may legitimately be represented in other words, taking a day for a year,—a remarkable prophetic disclosure of the time when the promised Messiah should come, to offer the great sacrifice for sin and to redeem His people.

This argument, however, has of late years been strongly called in question; and its refutation has by some been regarded as complete. It has been contended not only that the calculation of time by weeks was not customary amongst the Jews, nor the use among them of any one word to express the

period of seven days, but further, that the word which we translate “week” in Daniel’s prophecy is actually used by their Misnic writers to signify the space between one sabbatical year and another—that is, the space not of seven days, but of seven years. We are told that the word itself, simply meaning a “seven” or septenary, might be understood quite as well of years as of days; and that “a reader of Daniel who had not heard the period called ‘seventy weeks,’ or been in any way prepossessed on the subject, would not necessarily suppose that the prophet spoke of ‘sevens’ of *days*, but might very probably understand him to speak of ‘sevens’ of *years*’.”

Upon these arguments I would observe that, while it may be readily admitted that the Jews computed time by days rather than weeks, and that the period which we denote a “week” would by the Jews most commonly have been spoken of as “seven days,” the real question at issue is in regard to the true meaning, in the Biblical Hebrew, and Scripture usage, of the word ⁸ which our Version here represents by the English word “week.” Etymologically, doubtless, it would denote merely something composed of seven ⁹; but it must be carefully observed that the word is applied exclusively to periods of *time*; and in every instance in which it occurs, besides this prophecy of Daniel, it seems clearly to denote a week, a seven of days ¹. It may be said, in fact, to

⁷ Maitland’s “Enquiry,” pp. 6—11.

⁸ שָׁבוּעַ.

⁹ As in Ezek. xlv. 21, חַג שְׁבַע יָמִים “a feast of seven days”—where, however, still

it is used in connexion, exclusively, with *days*.

¹ See Lev. xii. 5; Num. xxviii. 26; Deut. xvi. 9; Jer. v. 24; Dan. x. 2, 3. (This last instance is specially important, as occurring in the chapter im-

correspond with the Latin “*hebdomada* ;” which, with the same vagueness of meaning in regard to etymology, would, standing by itself, suggest to any one, from its use, the idea of a seven of days—a week. I have said, that such would appear to be the signification of the Hebrew word in every instance but this; for although, in one passage of the book of Genesis², there has been a doubt amongst expositors, the great majority support that interpretation which is given in our own Version, and which the sense of the passage seems clearly to require, *viz.* that of the seven days, the literal week³. We have then, in this prophecy of Daniel, a word which would ordinarily convey the idea of a week, a septenary of days, used to denote a period of seven years; which, though not absolutely, is certainly in its result, equivalent to the alleged prophetic reckoning of days for years.

I have entered the more fully into the consideration of this remarkable passage of ancient prophecy, not only because of its important bearing on that which is immediately before us, but because some few of those who have, of late years, maintained the literal interpretation of the twelve hundred and sixty days, have expressed doubts, or have even strongly urged objections, in regard to that interpretation of the seventy weeks which, with the general consent of the Christian Church, has derived from the fulfilment of the prediction strong evidence to the Divine origin of our most holy Faith⁴. And the argument drawn from the one prophecy, in its appli-

mediately following.) Vid. Note, Appendix. The word occurs several times in the title שָׁבֻעוֹת “the feast of *weeks*,”

Exod. xxxiv. 22, &c.

² Gen. xxix. 27, 28.

³ Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁴ See Todd's Lectures (First Series), p. 191, Note.

cation to the other, will seem the more forcible, when we recollect that, as the former vision made known to Daniel the period “determined upon” his people and upon his “holy city,”—even unto the time appointed for the destruction of “the city and the sanctuary” of Jerusalem which then was, and the causing “the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” from her desecrated altar, and her courts left desolate,—so, in the vision before us, was revealed to St. John the giving of the outer court of a new Christian temple to the Gentiles, and the admission of their multitudes to “tread the holy city,” while the times of the Gentiles were fulfilling.

In perfect consistency with the argument which has now been maintained respecting the true interpretation of the terms employed in the prophecy of “the seventy weeks,” it may be freely admitted that, antecedently to the event, there might rest on the prophecy just so much of uncertainty, in regard to the Divinely intended meaning, as would veil from the eyes of the faithful remnant of Judah how long was the interval which was yet to elapse before the first coming of “Messiah the Prince.” And it would be but in accordance with the orderings of Divine Wisdom then, and with the general design of keeping Faith and Hope ever watchful, in anxious expectance of promised blessing, if it should appear that, in regard to the New Testament prophecy as well as to the Old,—the final consummation of “the mystery of God” as well as the solemn winding-up of the elder dispensation,—language was employed, symbolic, as in the former instance, and which would conceal at first, though time would at length reveal it, the full extent of the period which was to elapse until “the end of these wonders.” It would, there-

fore, be no matter of surprise, nor be a reason for doubting of the soundness of the conclusion to which we had come, though we should find that for ages a literal interpretation had prevailed of the language of the Apocalyptic vision :—that it was not distinctly perceived, or at all supposed, that the period foretold was to consist of more than twelve centuries, until those centuries, reckoning from the first Advent of Christ, were now so nearly elapsed, that such a view might be taken, consistently with the expectation of His second Advent as ever nigh at hand. For this, indeed, may be recognized as a paramount rule, if we may so describe it, of Divine Wisdom and Goodness, that the Church of Christ should ever be waiting and watching for the coming of her Lord, her hope unchilled by the knowledge of a long period of trial and sorrow still to intervene⁵. We find accordingly that, in the early ages, it was the general belief that, when that which did then withhold (by which they commonly understood the Pagan Empire of Rome⁶) was taken out of the way, Anti-christ should be revealed in its place, and reign for three literal years and a half; preparatory to which the two witnesses, of whom one was universally believed to be Elias, and the other generally supposed to be Enoch, would 'also prophesy through the like period of twelve hundred and sixty days, or three literal years and a half⁷. But identifying, as some of them did, this period of three *years* and a half with the half week, or three *days* and a half, of which mention is made in the latter part of the prophecy of the

⁵ See Elliott's *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, pp. 964—972.

⁶ Vid. sup. p. 78.

⁷ See Greswell on the Para-

bles, vol. i. pp. 368, 369, and the large collection of authorities referred to in his note, *ibid.*

seventy weeks⁸,—where it is said, “in the midst of the week,” or, “in the half week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease⁹,”—they did, in fact, while they undoubtedly interpreted the twelve hundred and sixty days literally, recognize at the same time, in some degree, a connexion between the vision before us and the prophecy which thus involved the mystic interpretation. And not only so, but in marking the duration of Antichrist’s time of triumph, upon the termination of the ministry of the witnesses, as destined to be for three years and a half, and identifying it, as some appear to have done, with the period of the death of the witnesses, they were visibly tending to the adoption of the like mystical interpretation in regard to another part of the vision itself. To this point I must now call your attention.

Having described the ministry of the two witnesses, the prophecy proceeds, “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss shall make war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another ; because these two prophets tormented

⁸ Hippolytus, de Antichristo, c. 43 — ἥς ἐβδομάδος τὸ μὲν ἡμισυ λήψονται οἱ δύο προφῆται, Ἐνὼχ καὶ Ἡλίας οὗτοι γὰρ κηρύξουσιν ἡμέρας χιλίας, δια-

κοσίας ἐξήκοντα, περιβεβλημένοι σάκκους. Op. pp. 20, 21. Cf. c. 47, p. 22.

⁹ Dan. ix. 27.

them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half,"—or, more exactly, "after the three days and an half¹,—the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them²."

It appears, then, that the period of twelve hundred and sixty days during which the witnesses were to prophesy, is followed by a period of three days and a half, during which they are represented as in the state of death; and if in this latter case the days be taken to denote years, consistency of interpretation would seem to require that the same mode of reckoning be adopted in the former:—there must be one and the same scale throughout. But in the latter case the days were, even by some ancient expositors, interpreted as denoting years³; those writers, indeed, being but few in number, and occurring at considerable intervals, but yet in some sort forming a succession. These writers, moreover, it is to be observed, have, one or another, employed in support of their interpretation the same arguments which have been appealed to in later times, as drawn from other parts of Scripture. Thus Primasius, in the sixth century, referring to the half week in Daniel's prophecy, as describing mystically the same period, treats it as an instance of the manner of speaking used in Scripture; or the converse, at least, of what we find in the case of the Israelites in the wilderness, to whom, according to the number of the days that the spies were searching the land of Canaan was to be the number of the years of Israel's wandering in the

¹ μετὰ τὰς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ ἡμισυ.

² Vv. 7—11.

³ See Elliott's *Horæ Apo-*

calypticæ, vol. iii. pp. 967—971, referring to the writers quoted below.

wilderness, a day for a year⁴. This argument is repeated by another writer, Ambrosius Ansbertus, of the eighth century, in defence of the same interpretation⁵; while yet another, St. Bruno of Asti, in the eleventh, refers to the revelation made to Ezekiel, of the duration of the iniquity of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah severally, through the medium of the symbolical action which the prophet was directed to perform, lying on his side three hundred and ninety days, and then forty days, a day being appointed him for a year⁶. And the Homilies on the Apocalypse which bear the name of Tichonius, of the fourth century, but which embody, (as it would appear,) together perhaps with his, the comments of later expositors, employ the argument derived from the difficulty of supposing that the events described in the prophecy could take place in so limited a period as three literal days and a half⁷.

⁴ “Tres dies et dimidium possumus intelligere tres annos et sex menses, quos in ultimâ hebdomadâ Danielis quoque prophetia prænuntiat affuturos. More Scripturæ loquentis utentes, quod dictum legimus de quadraginta diebus quibus exploratores terram Chanaan circuierunt, annus pro die reputabitur; ut hic versâ vice dies pro anno positus agnoscat-ur.” *Comment. in Apocal. ap. Bibl. Patr. Max. t. x. p. 314.*

⁵ “Hoc itaque in loco per trium dierum spatium ac dimidii, triennii et sex mensium summa describitur: more videlicet Scripturæ loquentis; quæ aliquando, sicut à toto partem, sic plerumque à parte totum ostendit. Sic enim arbitror in hac sententia per dies annos figurari, sicut filii Israël qua-

dragenario dierum numero, quibus exploratores terram Chanaan circumierunt, quadraginta annorum curricula, quibus in deserto peccata incredulitatis luerent, præfiguraverunt. ‘An-nus,’ inquit, ‘vobis pro die reputabitur.’ Et sicut ibi pro diebus anni, ita hic pro annis dies ponuntur,” &c. *In Apocal. B. P. M. t. xiii. p. 525.*

⁶ “Quòd autem dies pro anno ponatur, audi quid Ezechiel Dominus dicat: ‘Et assumes iniquitatem domûs Judæ quadraginta diebus: diem pro anno, diem inquam pro anno, dedi tibi.’” *Super Apocal. ap. B. P. M. t. xx. p. 1695.*

⁷ “‘Et vident de populis . . . corpus eorum, per dies tres et dimidium;’ id est, annos tres et menses sex. . . . Quomodo autem potuerunt habitantes ter-

By these arguments, as time went on, the interpretation—as, at least, it will appear to us in the retrospect—was gradually gaining strength, which made the three days and a half of the witnesses' death to be symbolic of as many years; and the ultimate result to which this interpretation was tending, was that, in due time, when there was no Providential purpose, as it would seem, withholding from men's minds the otherwise natural conclusion, the same scale of reckoning would be applied to the preceding period of the witnesses' ministry, and the twelve hundred and sixty days be interpreted as denoting that number of years.

Meanwhile, moreover, in regard even to that longer prophetic period, we find in the same expositors traces of a mystical interpretation, beside the literal—an interpretation referring it not only to the brief period of Antichrist's expected triumph, but also to the whole duration of the Church militant from its earliest days⁸. With these approximations to a systematic adoption of the symbolic interpretation, all that was wanting to its complete formation,

ram de duorum nece gaudere, cum in unâ civitate morerentur, et munera invicem mittere, si tres dies sint: qui antequàm gaudeant de nece, contristabuntur de resurrectione." Hom. viii. ap. Op. S. August. tom. iii. pars 2, App. p. 170 (ed. Bened.)—Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁸ Thus Primasius. "Non novissimam tantum persecutionem significat, sed etiam Christianitatis tempus omne." B. P. M. t. x. p. 317. cf. p. 314. (Cf. Tichonii Hom. viii. "Numerum novissimæ perse-

cutionis dixit, et totius temporis à Domini passione.") Andreas Cæsariensis, Comment. in Apoc. c. 29. *ibid.* t. v. p. 608. Bede, in Apoc. xii. 6. "Isto dierum numero qui tres semis annos facit, omnia Christianitatis tempora complectitur; quia Christus, cujus hæc corpus est, tantum in carne temporis prædicaverit." Ambrosius Ansbertus, B. P. M. t. xiii. pp. 522. 534. 545. Bruno Astensis, *ibid.* t. xx. p. 169. (quoted by Elliott, *loc. sup. cit.*). Vid. Note, Appendix.

was, it would appear, the arrival of a period in the Church's history, when, having now seen twelve centuries elapse from the first coming of Christ, she might count in years the mystic period foretold in prophetic vision, and yet, in the spirit of past ages, look for Him continually as nigh at hand⁹.

We find accordingly that, before the end of the twelfth century, the theory was put forth thus in its perfect form, which, applying the same rule of interpretation throughout, explained the period of three times and a half¹, or of forty and two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days, to signify twelve hundred and sixty years, "*accepto haud dubiè die pro anno*²." Thus unhesitatingly did the celebrated abbot of Flore, in the latter part of the twelfth century, lay down the rule and scale of prophetic calculation; retaining consequently the belief, that this period of three *mystic* years and a half would be followed by a period of three *natural* years and a half, which was to be the season of the Church's heaviest trial and most bitter persecution by the power of Antichrist now fully "revealed in his season³." With the particular applications then made of this theory to the circumstances of those days, or with the prophetical and theological speculations, or ecclesiastical views, which were engrafted

⁹ Elliott, pp. 964. 966. 972.

¹ Joachimi Expos. in Apoc. fol. 9, b. 148, b.; in Hierem. c. 20, p. 285. See British Magazine, vol. xvi. p. 370.

² Id. Liber Concordiæ, 2, c. 16, and 5, c. 118.

³ Cf. sup. pp. 120, 121, and see Note, Appendix. Venerable Bede, "in speaking of the beast's forty-two months

of supremacy, thus connects the last three years and a half of his paroxysm of persecution with his former state: '*Ante enim tres semis annos non aperto ore blasphematus, sed in mysterio facinoris: quod, factâ discessione, et revelato homine peccati, nudabitur.*'" In Apoc. cap. xiii. Elliott, p. 969, note².

upon it, I am not at present concerned:—it is the system itself, the symbolic interpretation of the prophetic days and months and times and years, to which I would direct your attention. And enough, perhaps, has been said to show, not only that the system itself has warrant in Holy Scripture, in similar portions of the prophetic word, nay even in the very structure of the vision before us, but also that its existence has been discovered there, in different degrees, as was most conducive to the faith and patience of the Church of God; and that indeed it was not an altogether novel hypothesis, at variance with all that had gone before, which was struck out in modern times by the ingenuity of controversial expositors, but rather the systematic and uniform adoption of that to which approximation had, in some sort, been gradually made, as, in the progress of time, increasing light was cast upon the word of Prophecy.

From the consideration, however, of the question respecting the true interpretation of the times thus Divinely appointed for the duration of the prophetic ministry of the two witnesses, we must proceed to enquire into the import of that ministry itself. And here, acting upon that surest rule, the making Scripture, as much as possible, its own interpreter, I would refer at once to a vision of elder prophecy to which allusion seems clearly to be made in this. “I will give power unto my two witnesses,” thus we read in the passage before us, “and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God

of the earth ⁴.” In the visions of Zechariah we read of the angel showing to the prophet “a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which” were “upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof⁵.” The prophet asked the meaning of that which he saw, and the angel thus declared it: “This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts ⁶.” “The good success of Zerubbabel’s foundation” (for such, in the words of our translators, is the subject of the vision) is revealed to the prophet, as obtained through the secret agency of God’s Almighty power, and by the superintending care of His universal Providence. And further, in answer to a more particular enquiry concerning the two olive trees, or, more specifically, the “two olive branches which through the two golden pipes” were seen to “empty the golden oil out of themselves ⁷,” the prophet was told by the angel, “These are the two anointed ones,”—or literally, “the two sons of oil,—that stand by the Lord of the whole earth ⁸.”

It can scarcely be doubted that this vision of Old Testament prophecy is expressly referred to, when, in the vision before us, it is said concerning the two witnesses, “These are *the* two olive trees, and two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” And “the two anointed ones” in Zechariah’s vision

⁴ Rev. xi. 3, 4.

⁵ Zech. iv. 2, 3.

⁶ Ver. 6.

⁷ Vv. 11, 12.

⁸ Ver. 14. Comp. Margin.

“are commonly understood to signify Zorobabel and Joshua, the lights and ornaments of the ancient Church, when rising from the Babylonish captivity⁹ ;” that Church being regarded as established under its two heads, the appointed ministers of God’s Providence, and channels of His grace and goodness towards His people. “They are Zerubbabel and Joshua,” says an eminent Jewish interpreter, Rabbi Kimchi; “and he calls them ‘sons of oil,’ because they were anointed with the oil of anointing, the one to the kingdom, and the other to the priesthood¹.” “Which type plainly signified,” says an approved expositor among the moderns, that “those two heads of the captivity,”—“the one Zorobabel as captain of the people, the other Joshua, as high priest,”—“did maintain and support the Jewish Church, represented by the candlestick, both alike contributing to its preservation.” “In the same manner,” he continues, “the two witnesses are the two olive trees in the Christian Church, supporting and maintaining its civil and ecclesiastical state. And as they are also the candlesticks, they also represent,” as the same writer further observes, “the whole body of the true worshippers, whose heads, as witnesses, they are. So that they both represent the true worship of God, and are also the means

⁹ Woodhouse’s Annotations, p. 227.

¹ Kimchi’s Commentary on Zechariah, translated by McCaul, p. 46. Kimchi adds, “Jonathan has interpreted thus, ‘These are the two sons of princes, who stand before the Lord of the whole earth.’ . . . And, behold, the olive trees represent Zerubbabel and

Joshua, and the two branches that proceed from them represent their deeds; for with their hands they began the building of the temple. The two golden pipes represent Ezra and Nehemiah, who came after them; and by the hands of these four light and good went forth to Israel.”

of” the Church’s “preservation in the true worship of Him, affording both oil and light².”

And, in this their office and ministry to the Church of God, we find them described as invested with the authority of God’s prophets in old time, and protected by the special Providence which surrounded and guarded them. “And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy;”—a manifest allusion to the instance of Elijah, and the judgment with which he smote the land, during the three years and a half of the predicted drought;—“and have power over the waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will³;”—an allusion not less evident to the signs of heavenly power exhibited by Moses and Aaron, the heads and leaders of God’s people Israel, in the land of Egypt. Thus in figurative language borrowed from the histories, in particular, of Moses and of Elijah, is represented here the invisible might which, during the testimonies of the two witnesses, should accompany and protect, in the discharge of the sacred offices which they were to fulfil towards the Church of God, these His “anointed” and His “prophets” by whose means, in their severally appointed ministries to that Church, He would keep up a witness to Himself in the eyes of all the nations.

In endeavouring to trace the fulfilment of this symbolic prophecy in the history of the Christian

² Daubuz’ Commentary, by Lancaster, *in loc.* p. 356.

³ Rev. xi. 5, 6.

Church through the long period of time to which it seems to relate, it may assist us if we revert, for a moment, to the general view given us in the vision, of the condition of things under which this solemn witness was to be borne. "The times of the Gentiles" were now come. The nations, as we have seen, had been admitted to the privileges of God's ancient people; being now "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ⁴." The great mass of them, however, as might have been anticipated where whole nations and tribes were concerned, took possession but of "the outer court;" they trod the holy city, members of the Christian commonwealth rather than true worshippers in the courts of the Christian Church. In such a condition of the visible Church, the outer court and the holy city would bear upon them the marks of Gentile occupancy; secularity profaning things sacred; corruptions in doctrine and worship brought in, or tolerated perhaps with something of over indulgent concession to the prepossessions, or the sympathies of the heathen mind; until superstitions and idolatries, resembling even those of the Gentile Paganism, seemed not only to have taken possession of the holy city, but even, as in Ezekiel's visions of the first temple of Jerusalem ⁵, to have invaded the very courts of the Lord's house. Yet, amidst all this, a witness was still kept up. Not only were there found, in successive ages, individual saints whose deeper piety penetrated into the inner court, and there in true devotion, came near to that altar where the one great Sacrifice for sin had once for all been offered, and brought thither the sacrifice

⁴ Eph. ii. 19.⁵ Ezek. viii.

of a broken and a contrite heart, the oblation of humble obedience, the holy tribute of praise and thanksgiving; but, beside this worship of the inner court, which was regarded with signal favour by Him who would have especial account taken of those who thus worshipped Him,—there were, moreover, standing witnesses in His temple, the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, to which they were appointed to minister; branches of the Church Catholic, still burning in the darkest times, with a light which, if it seemed sometimes to flicker or glimmered but dimly, yet still was kept alive; fed with oil which failed not utterly, supplied in channels of Providential appointment; so that, even when the darkness was deepest, “the lamp of God went” not “out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was ⁶.”

Amidst growing corruptions in doctrine and practice, and profane novelties or doubtful speculations of “science falsely so called,” “darkening counsel by words without knowledge,” there were still to be found those who cultivated the study of holy Scripture by the lights of purer times, and so carried on a living testimony to “the faith once delivered to the saints.” And for the due supply of such luminaries of the Churches, there were fountains of sacred learning, “schools of the prophets,” identified with the Church, as main parts and branches of its system, and which claimed the pious care and sustaining bounty of Christian princes and prelates, as being “fruitful olive trees in the house of God ⁷.” For so we find them spoken of, even in kings’ charters; and when they earnestly pleaded their

⁶ 1 Sam. iii. 3.

⁷ See Antony à Wood’s Hist.

and Antiq. of the University of Oxford, vol. i. pp. 77, 78.

own cause in times of deep depression⁸, it was in similar language, embodying the very imagery of the prophetic vision; for “how,” they asked, “shall there be burning lights in the holy Church of God, if there be neither oil nor light in the lamp?”—first, as they said, “the oil of holy conversation, and integrity of life,” and then “the light of doctrine, of knowledge, and truth, cherished in the mind within, whereby men might exercise the office of holy preaching, and administering the word of God⁹.”

Whether we are to look, in the records of history, for two Churches numerically corresponding to the two candlesticks represented in the vision, or whether by the two we are rather to understand a small number just sufficient to keep up the appointed testimony, thus much, I think, is clear,—that we must look for this witness within the precincts of the visible Church, the mystic temple, “the holy city.” They are branches of the one Catholic Church of Christ that are here described; and, moreover, as would appear from their organization, so closely resembling that of the ancient Jewish Church under its Divinely ordained government, they must be taken to represent national Churches. This has been well pointed out by a writer whose own religious history, and comprehensive views of the designs of Providence, led him certainly to do full justice to the piety discoverable in religious communities existing in a state of separation or seclusion from the great body of the visible Church, and which he would conceive to be represented in another vision—that of the woman sheltered in the wilderness¹; under which latter description, perhaps, are

⁸ In the 15th century. 589.

⁹ Antony à Wood, vol. i. p. ¹ A. Knox, Remains, vol. i.

to be included some among those (supposing them to be proved pure in doctrine), to whom it has been by many thought we must look, principally or exclusively, for the witnesses described in the vision before us.

The holy city trodden by the Gentiles, as has been well observed by the excellent writer just referred to, is evidently "the Church, in some respect or other; for else it would not be the Holy City. It is also," he goes on to say, "the visible Church: for the invisible Church is not capable of being thus profaned. . . . But it is also," he adds, "the visible Church, most obviously, in that view of it, in which it has suffered the deepest, widest, and most continued injury." The emblem of a "city," as he remarks, is specially applied to the Church, when (no longer in its original condition, "unaided by any earthly power, discountenanced and oppressed by all,") it arrives at that stage in its history when it "gets outward strength, when it bears the characters of stability and permanency, begins to be established in the top of the mountains, and to be exalted above the hills, and the nations begin to flow unto it." "The previous existence of the city, which the treading down," (as he regards it,) "supposes, may most naturally," he thinks, "be referred to the period, commencing with Constantine, and ending with the establishment of the Papacy, and of the revived Roman, that is, the German Empire." "The origin of national establishments," he remarks, "is evidently to be dated from

pp. 142—156. Comp. vol. iii. pp. 120—214, &c. At the same time, it would appear, he conceived this latter class might

constitute *one* of the two witnesses — which seems hardly reconcileable with the hypothesis.

the merging of the Roman Empire into the Church ; and therefore," he conceives, " we cannot hesitate to consider this as the epoch of the Church assuming its new, and, as it appears, more permanent character." And, in answer to the objection drawn from the declaration, "that Christ's 'kingdom is not of this world,' from which some may infer, that the secular instrumentality which" this "interpretation supposes is not consonant with the spirit of the Gospel," he suggests the consideration, "whether this supposed inconsistency will not equally attach to any adequate fulfilment of the great current of prophecy ; because, let this take place when it may, it must suppose, essentially, what is here objected to ; it must suppose a state of things directly opposite to that weakness and poverty which marked the origin of Christianity. Instead of our Lord's kingdom being then not of this world, the kingdoms of this world will be the kingdoms of our Lord." "But if this be a consummation clearly predicted, it is reasonable," he argues, "to infer, that there would be suitable plans of Providence for bringing it about. . . . If, therefore, the kingdoms of this world are finally to become the kingdoms of our Lord, what could we conceive more probable than that, in some way or other, the movements of Providence should be pointing toward this object, and, perhaps, the first stamina of the future system be actually discoverable? Here then, I must say," he proceeds, "national Church establishments appear to me to come in with the most perfect congruity. I speak not, of course, of the internal features of any particular establishment ; but of the mere act of the government of a country, in solemnly adopting, and maintaining, the Christian religion, under whatever

form, as a vital part of the national polity. In this, I say, as begun by Constantine, and carried on, since, throughout Christian Europe, I do think I see the first outline, however rude, of that state of things to which the prophecies I have referred to, with many others, authorize us to look forward²."

It must be regarded as no slight confirmation of the interpretation thus suggested by what may be regarded as an independent line of thought, to find that the consummation to which it would refer as the fulfilment of a great Providential design, in regard to the kingdoms of this world, does actually, in the vision before us, follow immediately upon the scene which terminates the prophetic ministry of the two witnesses, their death, and rising again. "After the three days and an half," says St. John, in words already quoted, "the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their

² Knox's Remains, vol. i. pp. 144—154.

faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, *and hast reigned*. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give the reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Then was to follow a signal manifestation of God's Divine sovereignty, and the pouring forth of His judgments upon the earth.—
"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail³."

If the general view now taken of the prophecy before us be correct, it may throw light upon one or two particulars in the introductory vision which opened this widely extended scene in the counsels of Divine Providence. The descent of the angel from heaven, in visible power and glory, planting his feet, the one upon the sea and the other upon the land, would then fitly designate Christ's Divinely descended Religion taking possession of the earth, and especially the Western portion of the Roman Empire. And the concealment of that which was uttered by the voices of the seven thunders, distinctly as it had been heard by the ear of the beloved disciple himself, would correspond well with the mysterious secrecy which St. Paul observes, in speaking to the Thessalonians, concern-

³ Vv. 11—19.

ing that which still did let, and for a time should let, the revelation of the coming Antichrist; by which, as has been already observed, was generally understood, in ancient times, the Pagan Empire of Rome⁴. While that Empire remained in its heathen power, such caution was highly expedient for the safety of the infant Church. And if it was indeed the establishment of Christianity in that Empire which was the subject of the vision before us, it would further explain how the contents of the little book which the angel gave to St. John should be at first sweet, but afterwards bitter. For that which seemed to hold out the immediate prospect of the happy and glorious fulfilment of all that the prophets had spoken, was indeed destined to unfold itself, as the event would show, through shadows of slowly revolving centuries, amid corruptions of faith and practice, and grievous profaning of holy things, and at last the afflicting triumph, though short-lived, of the powers of darkness, ere the day of God's power, long waited for, should come.

There remain still two important questions upon which we have not yet entered, *viz.* what precise date is to be assigned to the commencement, and consequently to the termination, of the prophetic ministry of the two witnesses; and whether the death and resurrection of the witnesses, as described in the vision, be already past or still future.

In regard to the latter question, the resolution of which would obviously go far towards determining the former, there has been much variety of opinion

⁴ Cf. sup. pp. 18. 78.

amongst modern expositors. Among those who have regarded these events as past, different writers have pointed out two or three distinct eras, since the beginning of the fifteenth century, each of the duration of three years and a half, in which the witnesses against papal tyranny and corruptions seemed to have been put to silence by their enemies, and then to rise again, after that short period of apparent death, quickened with new life and power. And some later expositors have endeavoured to find the fulfilment of the prophecy in the history of that fearful outbreak of infidel hostility against the public profession of Christianity which marked so fearfully, in a neighbouring country of Europe, the close of the last century. In the opinion, however, of other expositors, among whom is Bishop Newton⁵, the several critical æras which had been pointed out as thus corresponding with the prophecy, while they may be regarded as “partial fulfilments,” do not seem to bear upon them that *universal* and *final* character which belongs to the persecution it describes. The most plausible interpretation, perhaps, of those which regard it as already fulfilled, is that which would refer it to the times immediately preceding the Reformation. But if the opinion be correct, which seems to be generally received, that the twelve hundred and sixty years (if such they be) which are marked out in the prophecy are not yet expired, then, I think, we can hardly divest ourselves of the apprehension that the time of trial, symbolically described as the death of the witnesses, is yet to come. I cannot, at least, re-

⁵ Diss. xxiv. Comp. Woodhouse's Annotations, p. 235, and Vitranga, to whom he refers.

concile with the grammatical construction of the original⁶ any other interpretation than that which our Authorized Version has given of the words which it renders, “when they shall have finished their testimony.” The renderings which some interpreters have adopted, such as “when they shall be about finishing their testimony,” or “whilst they shall perform their testimony,” or “when they shall have been fulfilling their testimony,” seem to me altogether inadmissible. I can no otherwise understand the words of the original than as declaring, that the predicted period of the ministry of the two witnesses shall be completed before the final assault be made upon them by their enemies. The twelve hundred and sixty days of their prophesying must first be accomplished.

And with regard to the other great question, concerning the true date of the commencement of those mystic days, I would observe, that, if it be rightly supposed that they are not yet fulfilled, it will be no matter of wonder if doubt and obscurity rest upon the beginning of them. Those words of our Blessed Lord cannot be too deeply engraven in our minds, wherever we have to deal with the mystic periods of Sacred Prophecy, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power⁷.” To “discern the *signs* of the times⁸,” which is indeed our Christian duty, is a far different thing; and, considering the number of centuries which have now elapsed, not only since the time when the Gentiles were first brought into the inhe-

⁶ ὅταν τελέσωσι τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτῶν. “Cùm finierint testimonium suum.” Vulg.

⁷ Acts i. 7.

⁸ Matt. xvi. 3, &c.

ritance of the privileges of the Jew, but also since the barbarian tribes of Western Europe, one after another, were admitted to the outer court of the Christian temple, and to tread the holy city, by being made members of the Christian Church, those who are unable to identify with any crisis in its past history the season of trial here revealed, will begin anxiously to watch the further unfolding of a vision which seems hitherto, in its dim outline, as far as the actual fulfilment casts light upon it, to be reflected not obscurely in the history of the Church.

To us, especially, in this land where the light of truth hath so long shone, appearing so often and so signally, as the historic roll is unfolded which exhibits, through the darkest times of Christian Europe, the testimony continually borne in the Churches, more or less brightly and strongly, to primitive faith and purity;—to members of a Church like ours, whose calm, yet firm and steady protest, from the æra of the Reformation, for ancient Catholic truth against modern Romish corruption, has made her, through God's mercy, a light of the Christian world, —her candlestick unremoved from its place, and though once for a short season temporarily overshadowed, yet even then meanwhile burning the more brightly within;—a Church which, in her polity, exhibits the same Apostolic form with those seven to which St. John's prophetic message was sent, and which has had the light in her lamp fed and sustained hitherto, under the gracious care of God's good Providence, by ministries of His Divine appointment, in the kingdom and the priesthood, whereby the Church should consecrate the State, and the State protect and support the Church;—to us a vision, like that which was revealed to the

evangelic prophet and apostle, cannot fail to be one of deep and special interest. And this the more if, at any time, looking abroad on the face of the world, we should see the current of popular opinion, or the theories of political science, running counter to that view of Christian duty which has stamped itself on the ancient system of our Christian states and kingdoms, recognizing and honouring the alliance of government with religion, cherishing the lights of wisdom and knowledge, and the sacred institutions which uphold them, as ministrative and subservient to Divine Truth; and investing the rulers of the people, like the prince of the captivity of Judah, with that highest prerogative and glory of being the builders and defenders of the Church of God⁹.

What, however, we are to understand as shadowed out by that persecuting form of irreligious, or Anti-christian, power which is described in the vision as “the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss,” and which was to “make war” upon the prophetic witnesses, will come under our consideration on a future occasion, in examining the vision which immediately follows. But whatever that power be, or however it may triumph for a time,—if the season of its temporary triumph be indeed still to come,—we have, at all events, the consolation of knowing, on the warrant of “the sure word of prophecy,” that its time of triumph shall be but short; that those days of trial and affliction are numbered, “three days (or years) and a half,” and no more,—a few days only, “few and evil,”—and then the triumph, great and glorious, shall be on the side of the faithful witnesses.

⁹ Vid. Note, Appendix.

May it please Him who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, to grant to us, of His great mercy, the faithfulness, and the reward, of that Church¹, of the seven in Asia, to which the promise was graciously given,—“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown².”

¹ Philadelphia.

² Rev. iii. 10, 11.

LECTURE XI.¹

Rev. xiii. 5.

“ And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies ; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.”

THERE is nothing more remarkable in the visions of sacred Prophecy than the manner in which, without any appearance of design, one vision unfolds more fully what had been dimly sketched in the preceding, or completes the view of that of which only the first germ and origin had been discovered before. We have had occasion to notice this in the book of Daniel, particularly in regard to Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the image, and Daniel’s of the four beasts : and we have a not less striking instance in the vision before us, as compared with that which last engaged our attention, and in which was described the prophetic ministry of the two witnesses.

We saw there how the end of their appointed ministry, when now it had been carried on through the appointed period of “a thousand two hundred and threescore days,” was to be this,—“the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss shall make war

¹ Preached Jan. 5, 1845.

against them, and overcome them and kill them." Nothing had as yet been said concerning this tyrannical and persecuting power: it was reserved for the vision on which we are now to enter, to describe it fully, and to mark definitively the place which it was to occupy in the history of the Church's warfare. It might appear, indeed, at first sight from the opening of the vision which is unfolded in the twelfth chapter, as if it were altogether a new scene that is there revealed:—but we find, ere long, that it is designed to exhibit to us fully and clearly the agents of evil whose deeds of malice and cruelty had but been partially discovered before. And, in order to describe "*in all its parts*, and to enable us the better to understand the conflict, by ascertaining the combatants, the Holy Spirit begins the figurative history," as it would seem, "from the earliest times of the Church; and past events are represented in the same allegory which is continued to foretel those which are to come²."

"And there appeared," says St. John, "a great wonder,"—or "sign³—in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." By the general consent of interpreters the Woman here described represents the Church of God, arrayed with heavenly glory; no earthly material being borrowed to clothe or adorn her, but the luminaries of heaven, the sun and the moon, and the twelve stars. The imagery thus employed may remind us of that which we find in Joseph's vision⁴; the twelve stars, in particular, representing, it would seem, as there, the heads of the chosen family, the one Church of God, answering

² Woodhouse, Annotations, pp. 243, 244.

³ σημεῖον.

⁴ Gen. xxxvii. 9.

to whom were the appointed heads and rulers of the new and spiritual family of His true Israel, “the twelve apostles of the Lamb⁵.”

“And she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” And such, indeed, was the condition of the Church from the time when to the first mother of our race—of that great family of God’s creation which was in due time to “be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God⁶,”—was given the promise of the future “seed”—of Him on whom were to be fixed from thenceforth the eager anticipations and hopes of the faithful. And so the prophet Micah, having pointed to the favoured city out of which HE should come forth that was “to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth were from of old, from everlasting,” goes on to say, “Therefore will he give them up, *until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth*⁷.” “And we know,” saith the apostle, “that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now⁸.” And that which follows in the vision before us seems to show that the birth here spoken of is, in its primary and proper sense, none other than that of the promised Seed of the Woman, concerning whom it had been said to the serpent, the author of her temptation, the worker of her fall, and of ruin to her race, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy

⁵ Rev. xxi. 14. Cf. Ruperti Comm. *in loc.* “In capite hujus mulieris corona stellarum duodecim conspicitur, quia in initio nascentis Ecclesiæ, itemque in initio renascentis ejusdem, duodecim Apostoli notissimi ac

splendidissimi dinumerantur.” He refers to Joseph’s dream. Op. t. ii. p. 557.

⁶ Rom. viii. 21.

⁷ Mic. v. 3.

⁸ Rom. viii. 22.

head, and thou shalt bruise his heel⁹.” “There appeared,” says St. John, “another sign in heaven; and behold, a great red”—or “fiery-coloured¹—dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew,”—or rather, “draweth²—the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born³.”

The identity of the dragon here described with the great enemy of man can hardly be mistaken, when, a few verses after, we find him expressly designated as “that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world⁴;” and in the twentieth chapter we find mention made again of “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan⁵.” His seven heads and ten horns would denote universal dominion; such as he claimed to possess when he showed to our Blessed Lord, in the hour of His temptation, “all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them,” and “said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it⁶.” And our Blessed Lord Himself, when speaking of His final conflict with that Evil One, designates him, on more than one occasion, as “the prince of this world⁷;” and St. Paul in like manner styles him “the god of this world⁸,” and speaks elsewhere of “principalities and powers,”—not “flesh and blood,” but invisible,

⁹ Gen. iii. 15.

¹ πυρρόος.

² σύρει.

³ Rev. xii. 3, 4.

⁴ Ver. 9.

⁵ Chap. xx. 2.

⁶ Luke iv. 6.

⁷ John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11.

⁸ 2 Cor. iv. 4.

spiritual agents,—as “the rulers of the darkness of this world⁹.” The mention, indeed, of the “ten horns” might, at first sight, suggest a parallel with the symbols of the fourth beast in Daniel’s vision; and some eminent expositors have accordingly understood by the dragon the Pagan Empire of Rome. But the crowns being placed here not on the ten horns there represented as belonging to the fourth beast, but upon the seven heads, would seem to indicate, in the widest sense, universality of worldly dominion: and the ten horns with crowns, as of the ten kings described in Daniel’s vision, will be found in the sequel of the vision before us¹, amidst symbols which correspond more closely with the powers of earth there shadowed forth. And though, indeed, doubtless it is in the exercise of earthly dominion and authority that the great enemy of the Church of God is here represented, still the agent thus arrayed is himself the Spirit of evil, the devil and Satan, the Accuser and Adversary and deceiver². And when it is said of him “that his tail draweth after him the third part of the stars of heaven, whom he cast to the earth,” it would seem to refer, primarily³, to those companions of his fall, “the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation⁴,” and who are spoken of immediately after as forming his host, “his angels⁵,” —“stars of heaven,” as they are here distinctively

⁹ Eph. vi. 12.

¹ Rev. xiii. 1.

² “Diabolus sævitiâ cruentus contra ecclesiam potentiâ terreni regni armatur. In septem enim capitibus omnes reges suos, et in decem cornibus omne regnum dicit.” Bede, *in loc.*

³ That it refers also to the “stars” of the *spiritual* system, the Church of God on earth, would appear specially from Daniel viii. 10, where the same language is used.

⁴ Jude 6.

⁵ Ver. 7. 9.

called, even those “morning stars”⁶ who followed in the train of “Lucifer, son of the morning”⁷, drawn away after him from their glorious stations in the heavenly ranks.

The deadly enmity of the Serpent against the Seed of the Woman, evinced in the attempt “to devour her child as soon as it was born,” was fulfilled primarily and literally when the tyrant whose throne in Jerusalem rested on the Roman power, the power then dominant in the world, sought to destroy the new-born King who was to be the ruler in Israel. The word translated “rule”⁸ in the passage already referred to from the prophet Micah, and to which reference was on that occasion made by the chief priests and scribes of the people, is the same which is employed here concerning the man child “who was”⁹ to *rule* all nations with a rod of iron;” and it is worthy of remark that the fact of His birth was made known to Herod by the visit of the Eastern magi, who had come to enquire for Him, that Star which should come out of Jacob, and that Sceptre which should rise out of Israel, and possess universal dominion¹.

But the child was born and preserved from destruction, even He “who was destined thus to rule all nations with a rod of iron;”—a description which the prophetic language of the second Psalm had definitively applied to the Anointed Son of the Father². And that this power had been given to Him by His Father, our Lord Himself declares in his epistle to the Church of Thyatira, in which this

⁶ Job xxxviii. 7.

πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.

⁷ Isa. xiv. 12.

¹ Num. xxiv. 17.

⁸ ποιμαίνειν.

² Psal. ii. 9. “Thou shalt

⁹ ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν break them with a rod of iron.”

is the promise to him that overcometh—"he shall rule³ them with a rod of iron, even as I received of my Father⁴." And the same words occur again in the nineteenth chapter of this same book, in the description given of Him who is "King of kings, and Lord of lords." "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron⁵." And vain, accordingly, was the fury of His enemy: the Seed of the Woman was exalted far out of the reach of his malice; "her child was caught up unto God and to his throne." This last point in the description would alone seem conclusively to determine the interpretation of it as belonging, in its proper and highest sense, to Christ Himself, our Redeemer and Lord, considered in His human nature, as "the Second Man," the representative of our race, "the Firstborn among many brethren⁶;" who, as "Man" and "the Son of man," was "made a little lower than the angels," and "crowned with glory and honour," having "all things put in subjection under his feet⁷." The receiving up "unto God and to his throne," of the Child born of the Woman, can describe nothing less than that exaltation whereby, when He had passed triumphantly through all His temptation, and "the prince of this world" could not prevail over Him,—for he had power only to bruise His heel,—God "raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every

³ ποιμανεῖ.⁴ Chap. ii. 27.⁵ Chap. xix. 15. καὶ αὐτὸς ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σι-

δηρᾷ.

⁶ Rom. viii. 29.⁷ Heb. ii. 5—11. Psal. viii. 5, 6.

name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all ⁸.”

The consequences and effect of this exaltation we may trace, doubtless, in such an event as that in which many expositors have sought for the primary signification of the imagery before us.—I mean the multiplying of the Church’s spiritual progeny ⁹, and the bringing forth among them, specially, of one who, like the first Christian emperor, was marvelously delivered from the designs of his enemies, and advanced to the Imperial throne. In that history, without doubt, and in its further progress,—in the complete establishment of Christianity, before the end of the same century, on the throne of the Roman Empire; with the full recognition of Christ’s true deity as the Eternal Ever-blessed Son, begotten from everlasting of the Father, and the strong maintenance, by the Imperial power, of the claims of His Divine religion to the obedience of the Roman world—we cannot fail to acknowledge the working of that decree which had given Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession ¹. But still this was, as it were, but the earthly shadow of the dominion established on high, of Him to whom “all power” was “given in heaven and in earth ².”

⁸ Eph. i. 20—23. Hence the extension of the imagery from the Head of the body to the body, the Church. (Comp. Rev. ii. 27, quoted above.) See Wordsworth’s Lectures on the Apocalypse, pp. 257, 258.

⁹ Comp. Isa. lxvi. 7, 8.—

“She was delivered of a man child” — ἐξέφυγεν καὶ ἔτεκεν ἄρσεν . . . ὧδινε καὶ ἔτεκε Σιών τὰ παῖδιά αὐτῆς. LXX.—Gal. iv. 19. &c.

¹ Psal. ii. 7, 8.

² Matt. xxviii. 18.

Meanwhile, we are told, in the progress of the vision, “the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that she should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days³.” I need not remind you that we have here the same period with that which was assigned to the ministry of the two witnesses in the vision preceding; and it is worthy of remark, that as, there, the mystic period dates from the time when the outer court of the Christian temple was given to *the Gentiles*, and they were permitted to tread the holy city, so here the like period seems to have its commencement with the visible exaltation, to supreme dominion, of Him “who was to rule *all nations* with a rod of iron.”

But, before the vision traces farther the fortunes of the Woman,—the symbolic representative of the Christian Church, a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth,—a scene is disclosed of a great conflict in the heavenly places. “There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven⁴.” For the illustration of this description we must revert to that vision of the prophet Daniel, in which the angel who appeared to him spoke of a conflict in which he had just before been engaged, in behalf of God’s Church and people, while the prophet himself had been seeking, in prayer and self-humiliation, for some further knowledge of the mystery of His designs towards them. “Fear not, Daniel,” were the words of the angel to him, “for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to

³ Ver. 6.⁴ Ver. 7.

understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am sent for thy words. But *the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me* one and twenty days; but, lo, *Michael, one of the chief princes*, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia⁵.” “And now will I return to fight with *the prince of Persia*; and when I am gone forth, lo, *the prince of Grecia* shall come . . . and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but *Michael your prince*⁶”—or, as the angel describes him in the sequel of the vision, “Michael, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people⁷.” The express declaration of an angel from heaven, recorded thus by the pen of an inspired prophet, leaves us no room for question as to the meaning of language like that which we find in the vision before us: we cannot doubt that it is no merely symbolical manner of speaking that is here employed, but that it shadows out indeed a great and fearful reality of the spiritual world⁸. And our Lord Himself hath ratified, by His own Divine authority, the inference which we should naturally have drawn from the revelations of His prophets and apostles. “I beheld,” were His words to the seventy disciples, when they “returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name,”—“I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven⁹;” and again, when the hour of His suffering was near, “Now is the judgment of this world; now shall *the prince of this world be cast out*¹.” And again, when He gave to His disciples the promise of the Spirit, and declared

⁵ Dan. x. 12, 13.

⁶ Ibid. vv. 20, 21.

⁷ Dan. xii. 1.

⁸ Cf. sup. p. 126.

⁹ Luke x. 17, 18.

¹ John xii. 31.

that, when that Spirit was come, He should “reprove the world,” it was to be in the way of judgment, “because *the prince of this world is judged* ².”

The beloved disciple was permitted to see in vision, in its actual accomplishment, that which he had heard his Divine Master declare and foretel in the words which he has thus recorded. He beheld how Satan “was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death ³.” And when we turn to the historic records of the age which saw the triumphant issue of the struggle between the Christian Faith and the Pagan Empire of Rome, we find descriptions which may be regarded as at least the earthly shadow of that which is here disclosed. The contemporary historian, Eusebius, in passages which have been well applied to the illustration of the vision before us, “tells us how in hymns and choruses the Christians, who were before cast down, but now with countenances bright and happy, everywhere congratulated each other; and especially in the services of their reopened churches poured forth their gratitude and joy. He relates how by Emperor, as well as by Christian ministers and people, their deliverance and victory over the Heathen potentates was recognized as the result of the Divine interposition, a manifes-

² John xvi. 11.

³ Rev. xii. 10, 11.

tation of the Divine power; how Constantine professed himself to be, in his imperial office, only the imitator and servant of the King of kings; and so the kingdom administered by him, with Christianity dominant in it, seemed to be the very kingdom of God and of his Christ foretold by the prophets. . . . He tells us further, how, in the retrospect of the past persecution, though conducted by earthly Pagan princes, and on the accusations of earthly adversaries, they recognized the instigation and secret acting of their invisible enemy, the accuser of the brethren, the old Serpent, the Devil; and again in the casting down of these Pagans the casting down of the Devil. He narrates very fully how, at the same time, there was solemn remembrance of the martyrs and confessors . . . as of heroes that had conquered, specially by the doctrine of the cross, in the most excellent combat of witnessing and of martyrdom ⁴."

"Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them"—or more literally, "ye that tabernacle in them ⁵;" for it is to "the heavenly places in Christ Jesus ⁶," that the vision here relates; the tabernacles of His Church, still a pilgrim on earth, though holding fellowship with the highest heavens;—"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time ⁷."

The warning, thus given, of coming woe would seem to correspond with that which, in the vision

⁴ Elliott, pp. 785—787 (referring to Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. x. 3, 4. Vita Constant. ii. 19. 23. 46; iii. 3. 15. De Laud. Constant. i. 607, &c.) Comp. Bp. Newton, Diss. xxv. Words-

worth, p. 272, note (in reference to v. 16).

⁵ ἐν αὐτοῖς οἱ σκηνοῦντες.

⁶ Eph. ii. 6.

⁷ Rev. xii. 12.

of the trumpets, in the eighth chapter, was uttered by the “loud voice” of “an angel flying in the mid space between earth and heaven.” And in that vision, it is to be observed, the denunciation of woe follows immediately upon the scene described in the fourth trumpet, the darkening of the third part of the sun, and the moon, and the stars,—a description which, as we have seen, may best be interpreted as foretelling the overthrow of the ancient Empire of Pagan Rome⁸. And that which followed in the next trumpet, which trumpet contained “the first woe,” was the falling of a star from heaven to the earth, the angel of the abyss, whose name is Abaddon and Apollyon, the Destroyer. And if that woe was rightly interpreted as denoting the false doctrines and heresies, which, in the early ages, were raised by “the craft and subtilty of the devil,” tormenting men as with a scorpion’s sting, we may in like manner understand the denunciation before us as foretelling the efforts of his rage and malice, when the possession of supreme worldly dominion had now been wrested from his hand, and the pure faith of Christ,—the full confession of His essential deity,—after being, for a season, bitterly and restlessly assailed in the times of the Arian heresy, was to be finally established, under Theodosius the Great, throughout the limits of the Roman Empire. “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle,”—or rather, “of *the* great eagle⁹,—that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and

⁸ Chap. viii. 12, 13.⁹ τοῦ ἁετοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου.

times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent¹."

The great eagle here spoken of we have, on a former occasion², seen reason to identify with the fourth of those mystic emblems of earthly dominion—for such they seemed to be—the four living creatures which St. John beheld beneath the throne of God Most High. And that fourth, or Roman, Empire in its Christian state, made now visibly subservient to God's invisible kingdom, and, according to His Providential appointment, ministering to His Church, was that which, in the imagery of the vision before us, gave wings unto her to carry her into a place of security and shelter from the face of her enemy. "Among the benefactors of the Church," says the historian of the Roman empire, in his wonted tone of subdued irony, "the fame of Constantine has been rivalled by the glory of Theodosius. If Constantine had the advantage of erecting the standard of the cross, the emulation of his successor assumed the merit of subduing the Arian heresy, and of abolishing the worship of idols in the Roman world³." But, in the words of an eloquent bishop of our Church, "Christ had triumphed over the princes and powers of the world, before He would admit them to serve Him; He first felt their malice, before He would make use of their defence; to show that it was not his necessity that required it, but his grace that admitted kings and queens to be nurses of the Church.

"And now," Bp. Jeremy Taylor continues, "the Church was at ease. . . . Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended; but it

¹ Vv. 13, 14.

² Vid. sup. pp. 216, 217.

³ Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, chap. 27. vol. iii. p. 11.

proved not so. But then the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of the design of Christ, who meant by suffering to perfect his Church, as Himself was by the same instrument, was pleased, now that persecution did cease, to inspire the Church with the spirit of mortification and austerity; and then they made colleges of sufferers, persons who, to secure their inheritance in the world to come, did cut off all their portion in this, excepting so much of it as was necessary to their present being; and by instruments of humility, by patience under, and a voluntary undertaking of the cross, the burden of the Lord, by self-denial, by fastings and sackcloth, and pernoctations in prayer, they chose then to exercise the active part of the religion, mingling it as much as they could with the suffering⁴. What was this but the woman fleeing into the wilderness? And the time when this impulse came upon the Church is surely very remarkable—the very time when, if it had been a religion of this world, it would doubtless have been found freely entering upon the full enjoyment of its new possession. But the unbelieving historian has himself informed us, that it was “prosperity and peace” that “introduced the distinction of the *vulgar* and the *Ascetic Christians*.” It was “in the reign of Constantine,” he tells us, that “the Ascetics fled from a profane and degenerate world, to perpetual solitude, or religious society. Like the first Christians of Jerusalem,” he says, “they resigned the use, or the property, of their temporal possessions; established regular communities of the same sex, and a similar disposition; and assumed the name of ‘Hermits,’ ‘Monks,’ and ‘Anachoretēs,’ expressive of

⁴ Bp. Taylor’s (Twenty-seven) Sermons, Sermon ix. Works, vol. v. pp. 534, 535. ed. Heber.

their lonely retreat in a natural or artificial desert. They soon acquired," he tells us, "the respect of the world which they despised; and the loudest applause was bestowed on this Divine Philosophy, which surpassed, without the aid of science, or reason," says the historian with his usual sneer, "the laborious virtues of the Grecian schools." "But the votaries of this Divine Philosophy," he goes on to say, "aspired to imitate a purer and more perfect model. They trod in the footsteps of the prophets, who had retired to the desert⁵." And as we saw, in the preceding vision of the temple, that, when the Gentile nations with their multitude were admitted to "tread the holy city," the two witnesses began to prophesy in sackcloth, so here a like period of prophet-like retirement from the world is described as having commenced, apparently, amidst the very signs of Christ's taking visible possession of His kingly dominion therein. And thus was "her place" ready prepared for her in the wilderness, against the time when the Church would need a refuge from the face of the serpent.

The thoughtful student of Scripture and history will assuredly discover here something which, in its spirit and design at least, was beyond the reach of ordinary causes; and which, in its influence on the fortunes of the Christian Church through many an age, formed part of the wonderful arrangements of Divine Providence in her behalf. If error and degeneracy and corruption pursued her continually into the wilderness, and it became to her a scene of

⁵ Decline and Fall, chap. 37. *init.* The historian's statement is, essentially, correct. For a more strictly accurate

account, however, see Bingham, *Antiq.* book vii. chap. 1. Vid. Note, Appendix.

spiritual temptation beset by its own peculiar dangers, even as was the city, this was no more than might have been looked for from human weakness, and the deeply-seated enmity of her great adversary. It must be recollected, meanwhile, that it was in the desert that Athanasius found, in the days of Arianism, a refuge from his enemies, and a hiding place and home for the Catholic Faith⁶; and that among the religious communities which cherished, through a long period, the name of St. Augustine, as the great Doctor of the Western Church, his writings, from which were derived, to a great extent, their systems of theological teaching, were means, under Providence, of preserving from being overwhelmed by Pelagian error, or scholastic speculation, the great doctrines of Divine grace. And the ministry of St. Augustine himself, in his see of Hippo, as well as the final establishment of the orthodox Faith concerning our Blessed Lord at the Council of Constantinople, ratifying and confirming the Nicene, was “instrumentally due,” it has been observed, to the “respite given to the Church, as well as to the empire,” in the reign of Theodosius, “from the tremendous and already imminent irruption of the Gothic flood.” For, “had it burst over the empire, when first it threatened, at the death of Valens, it might probably,” humanly speaking, “have overwhelmed the Church⁷.”

⁶ Milner, as quoted by Elliott (p. 798), referring to the Arian times, tells us that “the Christians, avoiding the churches as now nurseries of impiety, went into the deserts, and lifted up their hands to God with sighs and tears.” (Cent. iv. c. 11.) “He elsewhere in-

stances the piety of the monk Antony, to show that ‘godliness in those times lived *obscure* in hermitages; though abroad in the world the Gospel was *almost buried* in faction and ambition.’” (Ib.c.v.) Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁷ Elliott, pp. 806—808.

It is this calamitous visitation that would seem to be described in the progress of the vision before us. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood ⁸." Floods of water are, in the language of Scripture, the constant metaphor for the invasion of hostile nations ⁹; and in regard to the particular period referred to, it is "not unobservable," as a recent writer remarks, "how naturally this Apocalyptic figure has presented itself to historians, alike ancient and modern ¹, in describing" the inroads of the Gothic barbarians. "As to the fury of the flood," it has been observed with perfect historic truth, "it was such as, throughout the length and breadth of the empire, to sweep away all the political bulwarks before it; and thus might well have been deemed sufficient to sweep away also the Christian Church, and Christianity itself, the professed religion of the empire. In fact, the Pagan remnant at Rome and elsewhere were not without their hopes of this result; . . . and to accelerate it, they excited the enmity of the invaders"—who, it will be remembered, were themselves Pagans or Arians—"against their Christian fellow-citizens ²." But, in the words of Bp. Newton, "the event proved contrary to human appearance and expectation:"—"the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth ³;"—"the barbarians," as he observes, "were rather swallowed up by the Romans, than the Romans by the barbarians; the

⁸ Ver. 15.

⁹ *E.g.* Isa. viii. 7; xvii. 12. Jer. xlv. 7; xlvii. 2, &c. Comp. Rev. xvii. 15.

¹ He refers to Orosius, lib. vii. c. 37. Gibbon, iv. 414, &c.

² Elliott, pp. 810, 811.

³ Ver. 16.

heathen conquerors, instead of imposing their own, submitted"—gradually, at least, but all alike, after no long time—"to the religion of the conquered Christians; and not only embraced their religion, but affected even the laws, the manners, the customs, the language, and the very name of Romans, so that the victors were in a manner absorbed and lost among the vanquished⁴." So that, by the end of the sixth century, "the Arianism of the invading flood, as well as its Paganism,—that false doctrine by which, and the secular force accompanying it, the Dragon had schemed to overwhelm the primitive Christian Creed and Church, and therein Christianity itself,—was seen no more. It was absorbed, as it were, into the soil, and had disappeared. Thus far the earth helped the woman⁵." But the inveterate hostility of her spiritual adversary was not extinguished. Other methods of warfare, of violence and craft, were still to be tried: "the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ⁶."

And thus is introduced, in the thirteenth chapter, the symbolic description of the powers which were now to become the instruments of Satan's warfare against the Church of Christ. In the delineation of that which is first mentioned, some points have been already noticed, as illustrating the vision of the four beasts in the book of Daniel⁷. From a comparison of the two passages it appeared, that by the fourth beast in Daniel's vision was to be understood the dominion of Rome, as it reappeared under the ten

⁴ Bp. Newton, Diss. xxv.

⁵ Elliott, p. 813.

⁶ Ver. 17.

⁷ Vid. sup. pp. 67—69.

kingdoms which arose out of the ruins of the Pagan Empire, and found again a principle of strength and unity in the little horn of the Papal power.

We must now examine further this later vision of New Testament prophecy. "I stood," says St. John, "upon the sand of the sea, and saw a wild beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns,"—thus far resembling the image and bearing the marks of the dragon whose instrument and agent it was, and from whom it derived its power,—“and upon its horns ten crowns,”—a point in the description, we may observe, peculiar to this vision,—“and upon his heads the name of blasphemy⁸.” This character is yet more deeply stamped upon that other symbol closely resembling this, the scarlet-coloured beast of which we read in the seventeenth chapter, “full of names of blasphemy;” having also “seven heads and ten horns,” and ridden by the woman, the representative of the great city which, in the days when the vision was revealed to St. John, reigned over the kings of the earth,—Rome the mistress of the world. The form which St. John beheld, united in it the attributes of all the four in Daniel’s vision; —“the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast⁹.” “The beast, like the dragon from whom he receives his power, has seven heads; which are explained to be so many mountains, or strongholds, the seats and supports of his

⁸ Chap. xiii. 1.

⁹ Vv. 2, 3.

oppressive dominion. The dragon, and they who held the reins of worldly power under him, had many such ¹." For though, in the case of Rome, the seven mountains which appear in the imagery of the seventeenth chapter seem to require a literal interpretation in reference to the seven-hilled city ², yet in the description before us, (so far as it is unfolded at present,) uniting as it does the characteristic symbols of all the four forms of earthly dominion represented in Daniel's vision, the seven heads, it would seem, must be interpreted in the same wide extent of meaning. And it is worthy of remark that seven is the number of heads of the four beasts in Daniel's vision ³, regarded as a whole, as a symbol denoting universal power and tyranny. And the head which was wounded to death, but was healed of its deadly wound, and lived again, to the wonder of an admiring world, seems, in the vision of the seventeenth chapter, to be clearly identified with the Roman. It is there said of the wild beast which was ridden by the imperial city, "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the abyss, and go into perdition; and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is ⁴."

For the elucidation of the mystery here shadowed out, we need but listen to the language which we find the Romanist employing to set forth the strange

¹ Woodhouse, Annot. p. 264. He refers to his note on chap. viii. 9. Cf. sup. p. 272.

² See Rev. xvii. 9.

³ The lion, the bear, the

leopard which had four heads, and the fourth beast, with its ten horns. See Dan. vii. 4—7.

⁴ Chap. xvii. 8.

vitality, so marvellous and glorious in his eyes, of the city and empire which had seemed once to have fallen for ever by the hands of the Goths. "True," says a writer of that communion, speaking of the capture of Rome by Alaric at the beginning of the fifth century, "it never recovered this stroke, nor was there left any room to hope that it ever could. . . . The mystery that had invested this city, in causing it to be regarded by the nations as something divine, as something invincible,—as a goddess in fact, and an eternal city⁵; even the magic influence produced on the world by the enormous wealth of its inhabitants, by its trophies, its architectural wonders, and the awful shadow of its renown,—these were either entirely at an end, or impaired and shaken beyond remedy. But," he continues, "although *the wound inflicted* by the Gothic king *was mortal*,"—the language is used, be it observed, with no thought of the vision before us,—"so mighty was Rome, even in her last agonies, that it required the force, the brutal fury, of the most ruthless barbarians, to be exerted, in havoc, in conflagration, and every species of violence, assisted for upwards of a century by famine, pestilence, inundations, hurricanes, and earthquakes, before she was left prostrate, like an enormous skeleton without life, to be infested and preyed upon by wild beasts."

"But as if the power," he continues, "founded by Romulus and the Cæsars had been designed by

⁵ ["She also (like Babylon) called herself the 'Golden City,' the 'Eternal City.' She vaunted that she would reign for ever." "The words ROMÆ ÆTERNÆ are found on the imperial coins of Rome. . . . The

Jupiter of Virgil speaks the national language when he says, (*Æn.* i. 278,) 'His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; IMPERIUM SINE FINE DEDI.' " Wordsworth, p. 343.]

Providence to serve as a chrysalis or husk to the papacy, the latter begins to appear and advance in development, in proportion as the former crumbles away, or is shattered to pieces by the invaders." "It was behind the chair of Peter," the writer goes on to say, "that the remnant of the senate and the people sought protection in the extremities of their distress." "The misfortunes of Rome involved the apostolic pastor in the business of peace and war⁶ ; he sends governors to the towns and cities ; issues orders to the generals ; relieves the public distress ; treats of peace, and of the ransom of captives with the enemy. What wonder if, in discharging these offices, in conjunction with those of his supreme vicariate over the church, the dignities of prince and pontiff should seem to be united in his person⁷ ?"

To those, however, who recollect the language in which Gregory himself denounced the pride of him who should claim such an office as a "supreme vicariate over the Church,"—declaring such an one to be a forerunner of Antichrist, a follower of Lucifer in his presumptuous ambition⁸,—there will appear, in such exaltation of the Roman see, and in the universal dominion which it has arrogated, something like a germinant fulfilment at least of the vision before us, "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast ? who is able to make war with him⁹ ?" It was

⁶ [See Gibbon, chap. 45, for the state of Rome in the time of Gregory the Great. It will be observed, that the history is thus resumed precisely where it was broken off before, *viz.* with the latter part of the sixth

century.]

⁷ "Rome as it was under Paganism, and as it became under the Popes." Vol. ii. pp. 274—282. (Lond. 1843.)

⁸ Cf. *sup.* p. 79, note ⁸.

⁹ Ver. 4.

indeed irresistible power to which the second Gregory laid claim, when, in language such as this, he defied the Emperor of the East, against whom, in the cause of image worship, he was prepared to stir up the West to rebellion. "The eyes of the nations," he said, "are fixed on our humility, and they revere as a God upon earth the apostle St. Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy. The remote and interior kingdoms of the West present their homage to Christ and his vicegerent. . . . Abandon your rash and fatal enterprize ;—reflect, tremble, and repent ¹."

But we come now to that part of the description which corresponds most closely with that of the little horn of the fourth beast in Daniel's vision, and also with the description given in the preceding vision of St. John, of the beast which was to ascend from the abyss, and to make war upon the two witnesses. "And there was given unto him," we read in the passage before us, "a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue,"—or, more literally, "practise ²,—forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations ³." This description corresponds closely with that of the little horn in Daniel's vision; each exhibiting apparently the same gradual development, first of arrogance and pride, and then of persecution. And this it is important to observe. In the little

¹ Gibbon, chap. 49, vol. v.
p. 107.

² ποιῆσαι.

³ Vv. 5—7.

horn in Daniel's vision, we are told, "were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things;" and his "look was more stout than his fellows⁴." And then the prophet continues, "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, until the Ancient of days, and judgment was given unto the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom⁵." In like manner, in the interpretation of that vision by the Angel, it is said of the little horn, which should be "diverse from the first,"—that is, from the other ten kings,—“he shall speak great words against the most High, *and* shall wear out the saints of the most High, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times, and the dividing of times⁶." And corresponding with this in the vision of the two witnesses, we saw first the holy city trodden of the Gentiles for forty and two months, during which time the witnesses fulfil their prophetic ministry⁷; and then, when their ministry is accomplished, the final conflict and persecution begin. "When they shall have finished their testimony," it is there said, "the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss shall make war against them and overcome them⁸;"—the same words precisely being used as when it is said in the vision before us, "it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." And, to complete the parallel, while in that vision we are told, concerning the witnesses, "they of the *people and kindreds and tongues and nations* shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead

⁴ Dan. vii. 8. 20.⁵ Ibid. vv. 21, 22.⁶ Ibid. v. 25.⁷ Chap. xi. 2, 3.⁸ Ibid. v. 7.

bodies to be put in graves; and they *that dwell upon the earth* shall rejoice over them and make merry⁹;" we are told here that these are the subjects of the dominion of the persecutor, the willing votaries of his service; "power was given him over *all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*; and *all that dwell upon the earth* shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world¹."

I have said that it is important to mark the distinction which is, I think, thus clearly discernible between the former and the latter period of the power here described. It seems to be thus important, because it has been strongly urged as an insuperable objection to the interpretation which would refer the imagery before us to the Papal dominion, that it is impossible to believe that, for many centuries, the power which was regarded throughout Western Europe as the head of Christendom, was indeed all that time, though they knew it not, making war upon the saints, and inflicting upon them cruel persecution. If the view now taken of it be correct, the long period of twelve hundred and sixty years, if so we understand it, represented mystically as three times (or years) and a half, or forty and two months, was the appointed period during which this power should "continue," or "practise," in its arrogance and pride; whereas the three days, that is, on this hypothesis, three years, and a half at the close of that longer period, were to comprise the special time of raging persecution, of bitter warfare and temporary triumph over the saints and witnesses of God. The fearful greatness of that conflict and

⁹ Chap. xi. 9, 10.

¹ Vv. 7, 8.

season of trial, is impressed upon them to whom the message of prophecy should come, by the admonition of solemn import, "If any man have an ear, let him hear²." And of what kind the weapons are by which, in that warfare, Christ's faithful soldiers and servants may hope to prevail, we are further taught, in words of warning which stand significantly in contrast with that which has been the characteristic principle of the so-called chair of St. Peter—a principle adopted in utter forgetfulness of the rebuke given to that disciple in his Master's hour of trial³. "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints⁴."

But another form of craft and power was revealed in the vision, co-operating with the former, and ministering to it. "I beheld," says St. John, "another wild beast coming up out of the earth,"—or more properly "the land," as distinguished from "the sea,"—"and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him,"—that is, before his eyes, and in his presence⁵, as his servant and minister⁶,—"and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed⁷." This second power was to arise out of the "land;" which, in contradistinction from the "sea," we have already had occasion to observe, seems to denote the original heritage of the

² Ver. 9.

³ Matt. xxvi. 52, "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

⁴ Ver. 10.

⁵ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ.

⁶ He is called by Irenæus the "armour-bearer" to the first beast. *Contra Hær. lib. v. c. 28. 2.*

⁷ Vv. 11, 12.

people and Church of God, as distinguished from the Gentile nations⁸—the East as distinguished from the West. And this point in the description may be designed, perhaps, to mark the growth of error in Eastern Christendom, which became subsidiary and ministrative to that complex form of secular and spiritual dominion combined, which arose out of the violence and commotions of Western Europe. The power here represented as the beast out of the land, is elsewhere designated as “the false prophet⁹ ;” his character as an Antichrist being marked by the “two horns like a lamb,” while yet “he spake as a dragon.” And he is described as working the signs of a false prophet. “He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast ; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by the sword and did live¹.”

We can hardly fail to identify the power here described, or that to which it ministered, with St. Paul’s delineation, in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, of him “whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved ; for which cause God” would “send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie².” The manifestation of that wicked one foretold by the Apostle was to be hindered for a time by a certain withholding

⁸ Cf. sup. pp. 271, 272.

⁹ Chap. xix. 20.

¹ Vv. 13, 14.

² 2 Thess. ii. 9—11.

power; obscurely referred to, but known, as it would seem, by those to whom he wrote, and which was generally supposed in early times, as I have before had occasion to observe³, to be the then existing Empire of Rome. It was, moreover, the general belief in the primitive ages, “that before the appearance of Antichrist the Roman Empire was to be dissolved, and broken up into ten different parts; yet by his contrivance was to be reunited, and restored to its pristine integrity under him⁴.” And looking to the actual history, when we find that, after such division of the Roman Empire by the barbarian nations, that empire, or its image at least, was in a strange manner restored, or revived, by the immediate agency of a power bearing on it such marks as those which distinguish the Papal see, there is, I think, no interpretation so probable of a difficult point in the vision before us, as that which would recognize at least its precursive and partial fulfilment, in an event so important in its influence on the fortunes of modern Europe, and occupying accordingly so prominent a place in the view of secular history. “The conferring of the imperial crown on Charlemagne,” the Romanist writer before quoted will tell us, “was that which deserved to be ranked as the characteristic event, not only of the royal visit” of the king of the

³ Vid. sup. pp. 18. 78.

⁴ Greswell on the Parables, vol. i. p. 392. Cf. Hippol. de Antichristo, c. 49 (commenting on v. 12). Τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ θηρίον τὸ τέταρτον, οὗ ἐπλήγη ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ πάλιν ἐθεραπεύθη, διὰ τὸ καταλυθῆναι αὐτήν, ἢ καὶ ἀτιμασθῆναι, καὶ εἰς δέκα διαδήματα ἀναλυθῆναι. ὅς τότε

πανοῦργος ὧν ὥσπερ θεραπεύσει αὐτήν καὶ ἀνανεώσει. τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ εἰρημένον ὑπὸ τοῦ προφήτου, ὅτι δώσει πνεῦμα τῇ εἰκόνι, καὶ λαλήσει ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ θηρίου [v. 15]. ἐνεργήσει γὰρ καὶ ἰσχύσει πάλιν διὰ τὸν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ ὀριζόμενον νόμον. Op. ed. Fabric. p. 24.

Franks to Rome, in the year 800, but “of the age itself.” “Up to that instant nothing but chaos,” he says, “had prevailed among the tribes that had overturned pagan Rome and its empire.” “Europe, or rather its embryo, was struggling, nevertheless, and travailing, though with abortive efforts, to emerge from this state. . . . The fragments of those mighty structures,—aqueducts, towns, bridges, highways, the ruins of marble cities, villas, and temples,—amongst which they pastured their flocks and herds, disposed their ambuscades in war, or pursued the pleasures of the chase, all these memorials were haunted, even for them, with certain vague imaginings, perhaps of admiration and wonder, concerning the order of things to which they had belonged. The same might be said of the relics of Roman society, and of its shattered institutions. The very name of the empire, the recollections of this grand and glorious society, agitated the memories of men. . . . Even the conquerors, themselves, were attached to similar reminiscences by their most darling passions. *The image of its greatness,*” the same writer continues, “was often brought before their excited imaginations, while they listened to the bards, who were wont to celebrate, amidst the carousal, the achievements and the prowess of their sires, who had figured in its wars, in its triumphs, but, above all, in its destruction. The consequence was inevitable. By thus frequently contemplating the *image* of this august order of things,”—I am still continuing the quotation,—“their understandings, rude as they were, could not fail to be struck with the glaring defects and inferiority of their own condition. They became sensible, that, belonging to the empire among the ruins of which they found them-

selves, there was a something which they had need to *imitate*, to *reproduce*. Hence the effect of *that stroke of policy which revived the Empire of the West*. On the barbarian world its effect was *magical*. Those dull instincts and imaginings, so abortive hitherto, and so wide of any definite aim, became, on the instant, so many powerful and concordant rudiments of stability. The idea, the project, that had been harassing the breasts of all, like a nightmare vision, but which no one had power to realize, was recognized and hailed by all with acclamations, the moment it was presented to them, in the person of their mighty hero, ‘crowned of God, the great and pacific *emperor of the Romans*.’

“From that hour,” says the same writer, “the barbarian tribes acquired a new relation,—one that attached them all, simultaneously, to a grand idea of general and permanent association. This,” he observes, “was the beginning of modern Europe;” and “such were the advantages which the Providence, that had already turned to so much account whatever belonged to the pagan empire of Rome, knew how to derive from its very name, and the *shadow of its former greatness* ⁵.” Doubtless, indeed, every tongue of man must own that the whole course of events in the world’s history, in its relation to the Church of God, has been overruled and ordered, in a marvellous manner, throughout, by His Allwise and Almighty Providence, and most signally in the present instance; but the visions of Prophecy, which so wonderfully teach this lesson, have at the same time assigned to the different agencies which have been the unconscious instruments of that

⁵ “Rome as it was under Paganism,” &c., vol. ii. pp. 320. 325-7.

Divine Providence, a place in the great drama, and stamped upon them a character, far different, oftentimes, from that which human discernment might have given them; and have exhibited, behind the veil of earthly things, principles and agents of the world unseen. And, be it recollected, it was the question of the worship of images in the Christian Church, as is observed by the historian of Rome's Decline and Fall, that "produced the revolt of Italy, the temporal power of the Popes, and the restoration of the Roman Empire in the West⁶."

The relations between the spiritual and temporal powers, bound together as they were so strangely, and interwoven so closely, in the system of Papal Europe, may perhaps be traced in the further description of the agency revealed in the vision. "And he had power to give life"—or more literally "breath"⁷—to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name⁸." The persecuting character of the Church of Rome is, unhappily, too notorious to need pointing out: and, though she wielded not the sword with her own hand, nor gave directly from herself the command for the execution of her sentence; yet would she give her victims over to the secular power, and make kings and princes inflict the punishment which she pronounced

⁶ Gibbon, chap. 49, *init.* ⁷ πνεῦμα. ⁸ Rev. xiii. 15—17.

on the guilty. And among the instances of the infliction, by temporal sovereigns, of penalties of the very kind specified in the prophecy, reference has been made by expositors to that which is recorded of the Norman Conqueror, “that he would not permit any one under his power to *buy or sell* any thing, whom he found disobedient to the apostolic see⁹.” But in regard to this whole portion of the prophecy, and especially the image of the wild beast, its compulsory worship, its mark, and name, and number, there is a difficulty and a mystery, the existence of which is sufficiently proved by the diversity of interpretations proposed by expositors; and which would lead us to the conclusion that it is reserved for the still unrevealed future, in the destinies, perhaps, of modern Europe, perhaps of the East¹ as well as the West, to remove the obscurity which envelopes the vision.

And with regard particularly to the mystic number, — declared to be a mystery by the Inspired Authority which hath propounded it for the thoughtful consideration of “him that hath understanding,” — amidst the variety of conjectures which have been offered, (some regarding it as a chronological date, others, and those the greater number, as composing a word, or title,) I know nothing better than to repeat the cautions of Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, reproving those who hastily endeavoured to interpret it, and saying that it is safer to await the event of the prophecy,

⁹ Roger de Hoveden, quoted (from Usher, de Success. Eccles. cap. 7. sect. 7) by Vitranga, Daubuz, and Bp. Newton.

¹ Dean Woodhouse would

interpret one of the two horns of the second beast as referring to an Eastern Antichrist, Mahometanism.

than to attempt to conjecture and divine the import of the name². I may add, however, that if a preference is to be given to any one interpretation, rather than another, especially of those which have sanction from Antiquity, the strongest claim, perhaps, may be asserted in behalf of one of those which Irenæus has enumerated, and which (though himself, it would seem, inclining rather to a different one) he thinks to be very probable, as being the name of the last of the four empires, the *Latin*³. But all seems uncertain conjecture.

If now, in reviewing the interpretation which has been thus faintly sketched out, or partially illustrated, and comparing the vision before us with that of the four beasts in the book of Daniel, it should seem that the principal power here represented, combining as it does the symbols of all the four in Daniel, must have a more comprehensive interpretation; and that it must prefigure some dominion of secular tyranny and pseudo-Christianity, exceeding, if not in magnitude, at least in craft and cruelty, any that the world has yet seen; such a conclusion will but be in accordance with that which has been already suggested, that all that has hitherto been put forth in Christendom, of Antichristian pride and persecution, has been rather the precursor

² Ἀσφαλέστερον οὖν καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον, τὸ περιμένειν τὴν ἔκβασιν τῆς προφητείας, ἢ τὸ καταστοχάζεσθαι, καὶ καταμαντεύεσθαι ὀνόματος· τυχὸν δὲ ἐπὶ πολλῶν ὀνομάτων εὗρεθῆναι δυναμένου τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀριθμοῦ, et nihilominus quidem erit hæc eadem quæstio. Εἰ γὰρ πολλά ἐστι τὰ εὗρισκόμενα ὀνόματα,

ἔχοντα τὸν αὐτὸν ἀριθμὸν, ποῖον ἐξ αὐτῶν φορέσει ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ζητηθήσεται. Contra Hæres. lib. v. cap. 30. 3.

³ Vid. Note, Appendix. So also Hippolytus, who, following Irenæus, seems more decidedly to incline to this interpretation. De Antichristo, cap 50. See Note.

and type, than the actual impersonation and full development, of that which must be yet more awfully “revealed in his time.” Meanwhile let it be remembered that the claims of modern Rome to spiritual dominion are co-extensive with the habitable world; for to Rome and her spiritual and temporal ruler,—such is her own undoubting assertion,—“all kindreds and tongues and nations,” even “all that dwell upon the earth,” must needs be absolutely subject; and even in regard to the revived empire of the West, the immediate creation of Rome, it was proclaimed by the oracles of the civil law, that the Roman Emperor was the rightful sovereign of the earth from the rising to the setting sun; and the contrary opinion was condemned, not simply as an error, but even as a heresy.

I observed, on entering upon the consideration of the vision before us, that its Divine plan would seem to be, to exhibit, in all its greatness, the conflict between the Church and her enemies, by revealing first the unseen powers of the spiritual world engaged on either side, and then proceeding to describe the earthly agencies which were to be instruments of the invisible. In the chapter before us have been delineated fully the powers, secular and spiritual, by whose united instrumentality the dragon went to make war with the remnant of the true Seed. In the following chapter we see the armies ranged under the Lamb,—the true Lamb, standing on the mount Sion; with the hundred and forty and four thousand, having not the mark of earthly power or false religion, but “his Father’s name written in their foreheads;”—the “redeemed from

among men," "the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb;" and we hear the voice of another angel, flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel, to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people⁴. These two descriptions taken together recal the scenery of the seventh chapter, the first gathering of the multitudes of Jew and Gentile into the one holy congregation of Christ's Catholic Church. The angel proclaims to the whole world the approaching hour of God's judgment⁵; while another declares the fall of Babylon⁶; and another pronounces a solemn denunciation of wrath on them that join the ranks of the enemy and the persecutor⁷. Again it is added as the encouragement to meek and stedfast endurance, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith⁸." And when the voice from heaven has declared the blessedness of the faithful dead⁹; and the opening heaven has revealed the harvest of the world, and the vintage of the wrath of God¹; then, when the last plagues are to be poured out, is heard the song of triumph of "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name," and who "stand upon the sea of glass, having the harps of God²."

But the final victory over these His enemies, the taking captivity captive, the wild beast and the false prophet, and slaying the remnant with the sword³, is reserved for HIM, manifested again in His power,

⁴ Chap. xiv. 1—6.

⁵ Ver. 7.

⁶ Ver. 8.

⁷ Vv. 9—11.

⁸ Ver. 12.

⁹ Ver. 13.

¹ Vv. 14—20.

² Chap. xv. 1—4.

³ Chap. xix. 19—21.

as in the first days of His Church's warfare, of whom we read in the vision of the nineteenth chapter, that He "is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war; . . . and on his head were many crowns, . . . and his name is called, The Word of God. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: . . . and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS ⁴."

⁴ Vv. 11—16.

LECTURE XII.¹

REV. xvii. 18.

“ And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

THE vision of which these words form the conclusion, is one to which we have already, more than once, had occasion to refer, for the illustration of Daniel's vision of the four beasts, and of that which last engaged our attention in the Revelation of St. John. But the more minute examination of it now in its several particulars, will fill up in some points the outline, which we have traced in preceding visions, of that worldly and tyrannical power which was in due time to arise, to be the counterfeit, the adversary, and persecutor of the Church of Christ.

The beloved disciple has been describing, in the sixteenth chapter, the pouring out upon the earth of those seven vials of Divine wrath, which, as we have already seen, represent the infliction, in full and final measure, of those judgments of the Almighty which had been in part accomplished in six of the seven trumpets. The seventh trumpet, as has been shewn, contained under it the seven vials, which are

¹ Preached Feb. 2, 1845.

“the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God².” And the vision in which these judgments are revealed, beginning with the fifteenth chapter, seems to be the carrying on of that which was described, in the end of the eleventh chapter, as following immediately upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet. There the adoration of the four and twenty elders before the throne of the Divine glory proclaimed the time to be come, when the Almighty would “give the reward unto” His “servants the prophets, and to the saints,” and would “destroy them which destroy the earth.” And then we are told, “the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail³.” In the fifteenth chapter the vision, as it would seem, is resumed. “I looked,” says St. John, “and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of the Lord, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled⁴.” Then follow the plagues of those seven vials; and when “the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air,” we read, “there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the

² Chap. xv. 1.³ Chap. xi. 18, 19.⁴ Chap. xv. 5—8.

throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath⁵.”

The vision before us, which follows in the seventeenth chapter, contains the description of that strange form, as it would seem, of idolatry and corruption which had been represented thus under the mystic name of Babylon. “And there came,” says St. John, “one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying, Come hither; I will shew thee the judgment of the great harlot, that sitteth upon the⁶ many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication⁷.” It cannot be necessary to remind those who are familiar with the language of Sacred Prophecy, that the term “fornication” and the character of an harlot, are used continually in the Old Testament to signify idolatrous corruption of worship, and forbidden intercourse with heathen kings and nations; and that judgments resembling those which are here described, are by the prophets denounced upon those empress cities of the ancient world from which the abominations of idol worship, and the pollutions which attended them, spread over the earth. Thus the prophet Nahum threatens woe upon Nineveh, the proud capital of the Assyrian empire, “because

⁵ Chap. xvi. 17—19.

⁷ Chap. xvii. 1, 2.

⁶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων τῶν πολλῶν.

of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts⁸.” And still more closely parallel with the language in the vision before us, is that of the prophetic denunciations upon ancient Babylon, the prototype of her who is here described. “O thou that dwellest⁹ upon many waters¹,” is the appellation under which she is addressed in the prophecies of Jeremiah; in which it is said concerning her, “Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that hath made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad².” And “the many waters” on which, in the vision before us, the harlot is represented as sitting, we are to understand, as the angel expressly declares in the interpretation of the vision, to be “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues³.”

Pursuing the method,—for none better can be adopted,—of applying to the illustration of Scripture-language similar expressions in other visions, we shall be reminded here of what was said in the vision of the thirteenth chapter, of the wild beast which ascended out of the sea, “having seven heads, and ten horns,” that “power was given him over *all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*⁴.” And, as was then observed, the power delineated in that vision was thus identified the more closely with the wild beast spoken of in the former vision of the two witnesses, as ascending out of the abyss to make war

⁸ Nahum iii. 4.

⁹ Or “sittest,” as here v. 1.

καθημένης.

¹ Jer. li. 13.

² Jer. li. 7.

³ Ver. 15.

⁴ Chap. xiii. 7.

against them and overcome them, while “*they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations*⁵” were to be partakers in the temporary triumph over those witnesses.

But the identity with the persecuting power described in those visions is still more clearly marked in the unfolding of the scene before us. “So he carried me away,” says St. John, speaking of the Angel who had invited him to behold the visitation of judgment, “he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns⁶.” The scene of the vision was laid in the wilderness; and this seems designed to recal to our recollection the vision of the twelfth chapter, where the wilderness⁷ was the chosen place of refuge for the woman there described, the Church of God. It would appear, as has been well observed, to have been with the view of calling that description to mind, that the wilderness is made the scene of the present vision⁸. We saw there how, in the very hiding place which had been given her from the face of the serpent, her relentless enemy still laboured to overwhelm her; and when “the earth helped” her and protected her from the effects of his rage, “the devil was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ⁹.” It was further revealed, accordingly, how there rose up, from the waters of the great deep, a power, resistless and cruel, to whom the dragon

⁵ Chap. xi. 9.

⁶ Ver. 3.

⁷ Chap. xii. 14.

⁸ Woodhouse, Annot. p. 351.

⁹ Chap. xii. 16, 17.

gave “his power, and his seat, and great authority;” and another, its fellow-worker and minister, but disguising its true character under the garb of the very religion which it supplanted; having “horns like a lamb,” while it “spake as a dragon,” and bade them which dwell on the earth to make an image to the first beast, which whoso would not worship must be killed¹. Such blending of craft and subtilty with violence and cruelty, such disguise of the worldly under the garb of the spiritual,—the transforming of Satan and his agents and ministers into angels of light,—might prepare us to find, as the masterpiece of his devices, that the very place where the object of his relentless persecution had found a refuge, should be made in after time the scene of his successful machinations; and a rival and counterfeit to the true Church of God be exhibited, wielding and controuling the earthly power which now, instead of ministering to her, was in very deed supporting her false rival and enemy. The woman here described is the very contrast of the former; not, like her, adorned with heavenly glory, the luminaries of heaven investing her with unearthly brightness², but borrowing all her ornament from things of earth and worldly pride. “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and uncleanness of her fornication: and upon her forehead a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth* ³.”

The word “*Mystery*,” prefixed to the name of her

¹ Chap. xiii.

² Comp. chap. xii. 1.

³ Vv. 4, 5.

who is here thus depicted, would convey at once the idea that she was mystically, not literally, Babylon the Great;—and Babylon, indeed, the city of the Chaldees' dominion, had now long lain desolate. And the only other place in the New Testament, it is well worthy of remark, in which the name of Babylon occurs, is in the concluding salutation of St. Peter's first epistle⁴, where the early writers generally understood it as designating that which was the great city of earthly dominion at the time when St. Peter thus wrote,—the city of imperial Rome⁵. In later times, moreover, Romanists themselves have not been unwilling to adopt the same interpretation, as supplying an irrefragable argument in proof of St. Peter's residence in that city⁶. But, indeed, we have no need to go beyond the chapter before us for a decisive mark of the identity of the woman here described with the city of Rome. For the concluding verse of the chapter stamps the interpretation so authoritatively as to place it, as it would seem, beyond the possibility of doubt:—"the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth⁷." But it is

⁴ 1 Pet. v. 13.

⁵ S. Hieron. in Esai. xlvii. 1. "Non ipsam Babylonem quidam sed Romanam urbem interpretantur, quæ in Apocalypsi et in Epistolâ Petri spiritualiter applicatur." Cf. Euseb. H. E. lib. ii. cap. 15.

⁶ *E.g.* Bellarmine (de Rom. Pontif. lib. ii. c. 2). "Ac, ut a primo incipiamus, S. Petrum Romæ aliquando fuisse ostendimus primum ex testimonio ipsius Petri, qui sic ait ad finem prioris Epistolæ: 'Salutat vos,' &c. . . . Hanc enim epis-

tolam ex Roma scriptam esse, quæ dicitur Babylon à Petro, testis est Papias Apostolorum discipulus. . . . Testis est etiam Hieronymus in libro de viris illust. in Marco, cujus hæc sunt verba: Petrus in epistola prima sub nomine Babylonis figuraliter Romam significans: 'Salutat,' inquit, &c. . . . Eodem modo exponunt Œcumenius, Beda, et quotquot in hanc epistolam commentaria ediderunt."

⁷ Ver. 18. Cf. sup. pp. 68, 69.

the less necessary to prove this point, because it appears to be generally admitted by Romanists as well as Protestants⁸; the great question between them being, whether it be Rome Pagan or Rome Papal that is here described⁹.

But that it is not Pagan Rome would appear from this, independently of other characteristic marks which we shall trace in the description as it is further unfolded, *viz.* that the mystic Babylon here exhibited is, like her prototype of old, the source and fountain head of idolatrous corruptions and enchantments to the whole earth. But ancient Rome, as Bp. Newton observes, “ruled rather with a rod of iron, than with ‘the wine of her fornication.’ Her ambition was for extending her empire, and not her religion. She permitted even the conquered nations to continue in the religion of their ancestors, and to worship their own gods after their own rituals. She may be said rather to have been corrupted by the importation of foreign vices and superstitions, than to have established her own in other countries¹.” The symbol of ancient Rome, as we have seen in the visions of Daniel, was that “fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly,” which “had great iron teeth,” and which “devoured and brake in pieces, and

⁸ Bellarmine (de Rom. Pont. ii. c. 2. § Prætereà, tom. i. p. 232, ed. Colon. 1615), Baronius (Annal. ad A.D. 45, num. 18), and Bossuet (Préf. sur l’Apocalypse § vii.) are quoted by Wordsworth (pp. 359, 360), who adds, “Similar avowals might be cited from other eminent Romish Divines, *e. g.* Salmeron, Alcasar, Maldonatus,

Cornelius à Lapide.”

⁹ For to suppose that it is Rome, become hereafter the seat of a pagan and persecuting power,—the hypothesis which has been adopted by some Romanist writers,—seems, in their hands, strangely suicidal.

¹ Diss. xxv. (Chap. xvii.)

stamped the residue with the feet of it ² ;”—a power marked with all the attributes of fierceness and cruelty, not of fascinating allurements. The mystic Babylon, indeed, was to be a persecutor, and so was heathen Rome; but the description here given of her persecutions will appear, when carefully examined, to belong rather to the days of Rome’s revived dominion than to her former imperial state. “I saw,” says St. John, “the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;” and there was something, it would seem, more strange in the sight than the mere cruelty of a heathen persecutor, such as St. John had himself witnessed or experienced under the reign of Nero, and now again under that of Domitian;—“when I saw her,” he says, “I wondered with great admiration ³.”

It was “with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs,” or “witnesses ⁴, of Jesus” that the woman seen in the vision was thus drunken. And the specification here made of the victims of her fury would seem not to identify them with those first martyrs, spoken of in the fifth seal, in the earlier times of the Apocalyptic vision, whose souls under the altar, crying for vengeance, were bidden to “rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled ⁵ :” the martyrs here spoken of, as the “saints” and the “witnesses of Jesus,” would appear rather to be the same with those against whom the dragon “went to make war ⁶,” when he had now been cast down

² Dan. vii. 7.

³ Ver. 6.

⁴ μαρτύρων.

⁵ Chap. vi. 11.

⁶ Chap. xii. 7. τῶν τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ

from his former dominion; and the attempt to swallow up the Church by the flood of waters had failed; and to the power which then rose up with re-invigorated strength, healed of the deadly wound with which it had been smitten, it was given “to make war with the *saints*’,” or, as in the former vision, with the two *witnesses*⁸. These, then, it would seem, were those “saints” and “martyrs,” or “witnesses of Jesus,” with whose blood the mystic Babylon was drunken; as indeed is fully declared in the interpretation which the angel gave to St. John, when he saw him wonder with so great admiration at the mystery revealed in his sight. “And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The wild beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend”—or, more literally, “is about⁹ to ascend—out of the abyss, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the wild beast that was, and is not, and yet is¹.”

This description leaves no doubt of the identity of the power here described with that which is spoken of in the vision of the eleventh chapter, as the slayer of the two witnesses; where it is said, “when they shall have finished their testimony, *the wild beast that ascendeth out of the abyss* shall make war against

ἔχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

⁷ τῶν ἁγίων. Chap. xiii. 7.

⁸ Chap. xi. 3. 7. τοῖς δυοῖ μαρτυσί μου — ὅταν τελέσωσι

τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτῶν. Comp. sup. pp. 347—349.

⁹ μέλλει.

¹ Rev. xvii. 7, 8.

them, and shall overcome them, and kill them²;" and also, apparently, with that which is described in the vision of the thirteenth chapter, where we behold it, in its marvellous revival from seeming destruction, the object of admiration and worship to "all that dwell upon the earth," even all "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world³."

We must, however, compare more closely the imagery before us, not merely with the visions immediately preceding, of which (as I have observed) it fills up the outline, but also with that already referred to, and to which it also bears evidently strong resemblance—I mean, the description of the fourth beast in Daniel's vision. We see exhibited in each of these three visions a form of earthly power described as a wild beast having ten horns, which represent ten kings; while at the same time, in each case, it is a power distinct from these ten, which is the dominant and animating principle of the complex system. In Daniel's vision there was seen coming up among the ten horns "another little horn," in which "were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things," and his "look was more stout than his fellows:" and "I beheld," said the prophet, "and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them⁴." So again, in the Apocalyptic vision of the thirteenth chapter, together with the wild beast which rose out of the sea, having ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, St. John beheld another rise out of the land, exercising all the power of the first beast before him, the active minister and agent in his

² Chap. xi. 7.

³ 12. 14.

³ Chap. xiii. 8. Comp. vv.

⁴ Dan. vii. 8. 20, 21.

designs of pride and tyranny. And in like manner here again we have the description of the wild beast with ten horns ; but it is ruled and controuled by another power, the woman who is its rider, connected thus, as it would seem, with the little horn in Daniel's vision, and with the second wild beast out of the land in the vision of the thirteenth chapter ; in both of which visions we have already seen reason to think we may trace, under the symbolic imagery, the spiritual power of the Papal see, co-operating with, and wielding to its own purposes, the powers of secular dominion.

But the identity between the woman described in the vision before us, and the capital of the ancient Roman empire, revived again to become once more the dominant city and mistress—(for so she would fain be accounted)—of the Christian world, is yet more distinctly marked in the next particular in the angel's interpretation of the vision. And more than ordinary attention, be it observed, is called by the voice of Inspiration to this particular. It is said emphatically, "Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth ⁵."

This description, taken in connexion with the words which expressly declare concerning her, that she is "that great city which reigneth,"—that is evidently the city which, at the time when the vision was revealed, was reigning,—holding royal dominion⁶—"over the kings of the earth," seems to determine the application of the vision beyond the reach of dispute. "There is no possibility," says Bp. Hurd, in his Lectures preached on this foundation, "of evading the force of these terms. It hath

⁵ Ver. 9.

⁶ ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν.

been said," he observes, "that Constantinople too was situated on seven hills." "But Constantinople did not, in the time of this vision, 'reign over the kings of the earth.' Besides, if its *dominion* had not been mentioned, 'the city on seven hills,' " he continues, "is so characteristic of Rome, that the name itself could not have pointed it out more plainly." He refers, in proof of this, to the "septem domini montes" of one Roman poet⁷, and the "still more famous line, in another⁸," in which is described the

"Septem urbs alta jugis, toto quæ præsidet orbi ;"

a description "to which," as the Bishop observes, "St. John's image of a 'woman seated on seven hills, and reigning over the kings of the earth,' so exactly corresponds, that one sees no difference between the poet and the prophet; except that the latter personifies his idea, as the genius of the prophetic style required." And in another well-known passage of the prince of Latin poets, we may trace, with Bp. Hurd, how "to an ancient Roman, the circumstance of its *situation*,"—its enclosing within its walls seven fortresses of its strength,—"was, of all others, the most august and characteristic" in the description of the imperial city,—so that "Rome itself was not Rome, till it was contemplated under

⁷ Martial, l. iv. ep. 64.

⁸ Propert. l. iii. ix. 57. Compare Wordsworth, p. 337. "There is scarcely a Latin Poet of any note who has *not* spoken of Rome as the city seated on Seven Mountains. Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Silius Italicus, Statius, Martial, Claudian, Pru-

dentius—in short, the unanimous Voice of Roman Poetry during more than five hundred years, beginning with the age of St. John, proclaimed Rome as '*the Seven-Hilled City*.'" He refers, for the original passages, to his Sequel to Letters on the Church of Rome, Letter xi.

this idea⁹.” “There was ground enough, then,” says Bp. Hurd, “for saying that the name of Rome could not have pointed out the city more plainly. But,” he continues, “I go further, and take upon me to assert, that the periphrasis is even more precise, and less equivocal, than the proper name would have been, if inserted in the prophecy. For Rome, so called, might have stood, like Sodom, or Babylon, simply for an idolatrous city. But the city ‘seated on seven hills,’ and ‘reigning over the earth,’ is the city of Rome itself, and excludes, by the peculiarity of these attributes, any other application¹.”

Nor can this part of the description,—the sitting upon seven hills,—be interpreted otherwise than literally: it cannot be paralleled with what is said, in the first verse, of the harlot’s sitting “upon many waters.” For these, we are expressly told by the angel, are not literal but figurative, denoting “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues²”; whereas in regard to the seven mountains, not only is no such interpretation given, but the sitting on seven mountains is *itself the interpretation* of the symbolic imagery in the vision, the seven heads of the wild beast. “The seven heads,” saith the angel, explaining their import, “are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth³.”

But the seven heads have a further meaning. The angel proceeds—“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not

⁹ “Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma,
Septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces.”

Virg. Georg. ii. 535.

¹ Hurd’s Introd. to the Prophecies, Sermon xi.

² Ver. 15.

³ Ver. 9.

yet come ;” or more literally still, to give the force of the definite article—“the five are fallen, and the one is ⁴, the other is not yet come ; and when he is come, he must continue a short space. And the wild beast that was and is not, even he is an eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth unto perdition ⁵.”

This part of the description has given rise to much discussion among interpreters. The generality, however, of Protestant expositors, since the time of Mede, have understood it as representing, by the five fallen, the successive forms of government under which Rome had existed, as enumerated by her two principal historians ⁶, *viz.* kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes ; these five having already passed away when the vision was seen by St. John ; the empire of the Cæsars being the sixth, which was then in possession ; while that other which was to follow, and to last but a short time, has been variously interpreted of the government of Rome under the Eastern or the Western Emperor, or the Christian empire generally, prior to the establishment of the papal sovereignty. On comparing, however, the vision before us with that of the twelfth and thirteenth chapters, there will appear, I think, some reason for doubt whether we must not adopt a somewhat wider and more comprehensive interpretation, especially in regard to the five heads which are described as fallen. The seven heads of the dragon, and of the wild beast from the sea, must be taken, as we there saw, to represent collectively the various forms of earthly dominion ⁷ ; and the wild beast having the seven heads in the

⁴ οἱ πέντε ἔπεσαν, καὶ ὁ εἷς ἐστίν.

⁵ Vv. 10, 11.

⁶ Liv. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 1. Taciti Ann. lib. i. cap. i.

⁷ Vid. sup. pp. 328. 344.

vision of the thirteenth chapter, bore upon it the characteristic marks of all the four beasts in Daniel's vision,—the Babylonian, the Persian, and the Macedonian, as well as the Roman. And if to these we add those two yet more ancient monarchies which held the chief place, in the earliest times of the world's history, and which were represented, (if we interpreted the symbols rightly,) by the first two of the four "living creatures⁸," we shall have five "kings," or kingdoms, which had already fallen when imperial Rome was in the zenith of her power—Assyria and Egypt, Babylon, Persia, and Macedon⁹. And the heads of the wild beast on which the woman was seated, representing primarily, as we have seen, the seven mountains of the great city, would with more evident fitness correspond with the several kingdoms which were swallowed up in the universal empire of Rome, than with the successive forms which her government assumed, even were those several forms of government better entitled than they seem to be, to be counted as so many distinct "kings," or kingdoms¹. For as, in the interpretation of the ten horns, we find ten *distinct kingdoms* which arose out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, so by the seven kings, answering to the seven heads, we should naturally suppose to be symbolized, and that on a larger and wider scale than in the case of the ten horns on the one head, seven distinct kingdoms. And the imagery would have in it a peculiar propriety, if these were kingdoms embracing within their collective limits the whole earth, and swallowed up successively by Rome, continually extend-

⁸ Cf. sup. pp. 212—215.

⁹ Vid. Note, Appendix.

¹ See Dr. Maitland's *Second Enquiry*, pp. 153—171.

ing her territories, in like manner as the seven hills, which, in her early days, were one after another enclosed within her walls; so that the seven-hilled capital of her dominion would be, as it were, a miniature of her entire empire, the whole world². Five great monarchies of the earth had fallen, (if thus, then, we may interpret the imagery before us,) “and the one,” which was now the head of the wild beast, when St. John beheld the vision, was the Pagan empire of the Roman Cæsars. “The other” was “not yet come;” and the manner in which that other is spoken of would seem almost to exclude it from being counted as one of the seven³; while, on the other hand, concerning the eighth, “the beast that was, and is not,” it is said, “he is of the seven, and goeth into perdition”—the last form which this mysterious and manifold type of earthly dominion was destined to assume. We may therefore, perhaps, rightly understand by that “other,” or seventh, head, the Empire as it existed in its Christian form during the interval between the time when Rome was the capital of the Pagan Empire, and the time when she became again the head of the Papal; the dominion, during the intervening period, having been transferred, it is worthy of remark, to new Rome or Constantinople⁴.

But the angel proceeds further to declare the import of the ten horns which were seen on the head of the wild beast. “The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour”

² Rome has been styled an “epitome” of the world.

³ ὁ ἄλλος οὐπω ἦλθε· καὶ ὅταν ἔλθῃ, ὀλίγον αὐτὸν δεῖ

μεῖναι. Καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὃ ἦν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ αὐτὸς ὄγδοός ἐστι, καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἐστι. . .

⁴ Vid. Note, Appendix.

—or, as it may be rendered, “in one hour⁵,—with the wild beast⁶.” The ten horns, or kingdoms, here described, would seem to identify, as has been already observed, the wild beast of this vision with the fourth beast in the vision of Daniel, and also (thus far, at least) with the wild beast out of the sea in the vision of the thirteenth chapter; and here, as there, we must understand by the imagery the ten kingdoms which derived their origin out of the ruins of the Roman Empire in the West. And upon this point also, as well as in regard to the identity of the woman here described with Rome, in the one form of her existence or in the other, we may claim the support of high authority amongst the Romanists themselves. Bossuet interprets the ten horns to be the ten kingdoms which dismembered the Roman empire⁷; and, this being granted, it is difficult, I think, to escape from the conclusion which would make Rome in her Papal, and not in her Pagan, state, to be the subject of the prophetic vision.

We must here, however, mention a different rendering which is to be found in the Vulgate, and which would represent the ten kings as receiving power “one hour,” or “the same hour, *after* the beast”—not “with,” as in the received text. But there is no ground whatever for any departure from that text:—*μετὰ τοῦ θηρίου*, not *μετὰ τὸ θήριον*, is the

⁵ ἐξουσίαν ὥς βασιλεῖς μίαν ὥραν λαμβάνουσι μετὰ τοῦ θηρίου—“unâ horâ.” Vulg. So also the Latin version in S. Irenæus and Primasius. (Vid. Bossuet.) Elliott (p. 872, note) refers to John iv. 52 and Rev. iii. 3, for a similar use of the accusative.

⁶ The words *μετὰ τοῦ θηρίου* must, I conceive, be immediately connected with *λαμβάνουσι*, not with *μίαν ὥραν*. Vid. Note, Appendix.

⁷ Bossuet follows, as his authority, the commentary of Berengaudus.

undoubted reading in the original. If the received text be retained, which Bossuet himself admits to have great authority, the interpretation which he would in this case adopt, is that the Gothic kings should come, at one and the same time, into the Western Empire to reign there with Rome, who was not all at once to lose her power⁸. But this interpretation can hardly be made to consist with the facts of the history: the kings who came to establish themselves in the Roman Empire can scarcely be said to have received power *with* it. For it is surely an inadequate interpretation of the following verse—"These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the wild beast"⁹—to explain it as describing how the Empire, in its weakness, sought to avert the coming overthrow by enlisting the barbarians as auxiliaries in its armies¹. It was not until the ancient empire was destroyed, and the new kingdoms were established upon its ruins, that they could be fitly represented in prophetic imagery as horns, or kingdoms, possessed of power and exercising their power in concert². And

⁸ "Ces dix rois viendront, comme *en même temps*, dans l'empire de l'Occident, pour y régner avec la bête, c'est-à-dire, avec Rome, qui ne perdra pas tout à coup sa puissance; et ce sens, qui est le plus autorisé, est en même temps le plus naturel." L'Apocalypse, *in loc.* Compare Bossuet's defence of his commentary in the "De excidio Babylonis."

⁹ Ver. 13.

¹ " 'Et ils donneront leur force et leur puissance à la bête: leurs armées seront à la solde de Rome, et dans l'alliance de ces empereurs.' Bos-

suet.

² Bossuet himself observes—"Les rois dont il s'agit ne sont pas des rois comme les autres, qui cherchent à faire des conquêtes sur l'empire pour en agrandir leur royaume: ce sont tous rois sans royaume, du moins sans aucun siège déterminé de leur domination, qui cherchent à s'établir, et à se faire un royaume dans un pays que celui qu'ils ont quitté. On ne vit jamais à la fois tant de rois de ce caractère, qu'il en parut dans le temps de la décadence de l'empire romain."

the efforts of their force combined, as described in the vision, shew clearly that the power to which they lend their aid, is one which is in full vigour contemporarily with them, not a falling empire into whose place they are ready to succeed. "These"—*i. e.* the ten kings, giving their strength and power unto the wild beast,—“shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are chosen, and called, and faithful³.”

For the illustration of this passage we must refer to the nineteenth chapter. “I saw *the wild beast, and the kings of the earth*⁴, and their armies, gathered together, to *make war* against him that sat on the horse”—the same who had “on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords⁵”—and against his army. And the wild beast was taken, and with him the false prophet—the same with the second beast which rose out of the land, and of which we read in the thirteenth chapter⁶—“and the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh⁷.” It would rather appear, from the language used in the vision before us, as though it would be for a long period that the

³ Ver. 14.

⁴ Comp. vv. 17, 18, immediately preceding, and Ezek. xxxix. 18—20.

⁵ Chap. xix. 16.

⁶ For the false prophet is here described as he “that wrought miracles before” the wild beast, “with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his

image.” Comp. chap. xiii. 12—17.

⁷ Chap. xix. 19—21. Bossuet, following Berengaudus, would interpret the words, “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them,” as referring to the Gothic persecutors, and the conversion of those nations, for the most part, to the faith of Christ.

ten kings would "give their power and strength to the wild beast," until at length they should turn against the mistress to whose service they had before yielded themselves. It is said, "The ten horns which thou sawest upon the wild beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the wild beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled ⁸."

By Romish expositors this prediction is referred to the capture and burning of Rome by the Goths in the fifth and sixth centuries; but, meanwhile, they have some difficulty in dealing with the fact that Rome had then ceased to be Pagan—and it is *Pagan* Rome exclusively that, they tell us, is represented in the vision: she had become professedly Christian when the fury of the Goths fell upon her ⁹. But, even had this been otherwise, the calamities brought upon Rome by those barbarians, in their first irruption into the Empire, can hardly be made to be the fulfilment of a prophecy which, as has been already said, would seem to interpose a considerable period between the time when the kings here spoken of should court the favour of the empress city, and the time when they should be turned to be her enemies.

A conclusive argument, however, against the interpretation in question is to be found in the fact, that, when Rome was thus taken, and pillaged, and burnt by the Goths, it fell not finally and utterly, never to rise again, according to the denunciations of the prophetic vision. We saw, on a former occa-

⁸ Vv. 16, 17.

⁹ Vid. Note, Appendix.

sion, how it is, in the eye of the devoted Romanist, the surpassing glory and wonder of the city of his adoration, that, when she seemed to have fallen for ever, she rose again, as from the very dust, under the fostering care of the papal power. But it was far otherwise with the mystic Babylon in the vision, when the hour of *her* doom was come. "After these things," says St. John, in the opening of the following chapter, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird¹." The hypothesis that it is the fall of *Pagan* Rome that is foretold in the vision, would require that that fall should be followed by a state of utter desolation, such as we find here described under imagery similar to that which is used in the prophecies concerning ancient Babylon². It excludes altogether the idea of a subsequent state of pre-eminent glory, like that to which, as the Romanist will proudly proclaim, the city of Rome was exalted, when from Pagan she became Christian, the capital and metropolis of the Christian world. As regards ancient Babylon, from the time when the Persian conqueror took the city, she never again recovered her former power and splendour: she sunk, though not all at once, yet not the less hopelessly and finally, as one doomed to utter destruction in His eyes, whose judgments hold on their course with a certainty the more awful from their

¹ Chap. xviii. 1, 2.

² Comp. Isai. xiii. 21, 22. Jer. l. 39; li. 37.

apparent tardiness. The words which Seraiah, when he went into Babylon with the captive king of Judah, in the day of Nebuchadnezzar's triumph, was commanded by the prophet Jeremiah to utter solemnly there, he who now visits the wilderness where Babylon once stood sees fearfully fulfilled to the very letter: "O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever³." Though it were not all at once, yet from the day when the Mede and the Persian entered her walls as conquerors, even thus did Babylon of old "sink;" she never again was able to "rise from the evil that" the Almighty Avenger had solemnly declared He would "bring upon her⁴."

In the denunciations pronounced upon ancient Babylon, it was not expressly declared *how soon* the full and final vengeance was to be inflicted; but if she had ever risen again in renewed life and beauty, then, indeed, there would have been room for questioning the fulfilment of the word of Prophecy. And undoubtedly, as regards the vision before us concerning the *mystic* Babylon, no calamities, no destruction by fire or sword, can be regarded as fulfilling the language of the vision, unless those calamities were irremediable, and that destruction final. For it is declared solemnly, in the eighteenth chapter, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be *utterly burned* with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication

³ Jer. li. 62.

⁴ Ibid. v. 64.

and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is *thy judgment* come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth her merchandise *any more*; and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and *thou shalt find them no more at all*. Alas, alas that great city, for in one hour is she *made desolate*. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, *and shall be found no more at all*⁵. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, *shall be heard no more at all in thee*; and no craftsmen, of whatsoever craft he be, *shall be found any more in thee*; and the sound of a millstone *shall be heard no more at all in thee*; and the light of a candle *shall shine no more at all in thee*; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride *shall be heard no more at all in thee*: And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great harlot, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up *for ever and ever*⁶."

It can be nothing short of final and hopeless

⁵ Comp. Jer. li. 64.

⁶ Chap. xviii. 8—24; xix. 1—3.

destruction, a fall from which the city whose doom is written here should never rise again, that is described in language such as this. But that no such destruction was inflicted on Rome by the hand of the Goth, is declared by the living witness of Rome herself for well nigh thirteen hundred years; and that the vengeance predicted was not then accomplished is the more strikingly shewn, when we consider how near it seemed to its accomplishment. “‘Totila, the Goth,’ says Procopius (who served in the staff of Belisarius, and was his secretary), ‘determined to level Rome with the ground, and make the regions where it stood a place of pasturage for flocks and herds.’ Preparations were made,” continues a recent writer of the Romish communion, whom I quoted on a former occasion, “to overturn the monuments and trophies that still survived so many ravages, and to destroy the palaces and temples by fire. These,” however, Totila “spared, at the instance of an embassy sent by Belisarius, from where he lay with the forces of the Greek emperor at Ostia; but the walls he caused to be in great part demolished, and carried away as captives the miserable remnant of the senate and Roman people, with their wives and children’.” “As to the Roman people, a miserable handful of forlorn and emaciated outcasts—not more than five hundred, men, women, and children, as they were—was the only shadow left of that once mighty name. Even these were now led away into slavery by the Goths, who also tore down the gates of the Eternal City, and carried them off as trophies. Not a single human being was permitted to remain. The words most ex-

’ “Rome as it was under Paganism, &c.” vol. ii. p. 196.

pressive of perfect solitude and desertion,"—I am quoting still from the same Romanist writer,—“are those adopted by Procopius to describe the condition in which Totila left the region of the ‘Seven Hills.’ ‘In Rome he suffered nothing human to remain, leaving it altogether, in every part, a perfect desert⁸.’” And “the account in the Chronicle of Marcellinus,” it is added, “agrees with this nearly to the letter. ‘Every thing that had belonged to the Romans,’ he says, ‘was carried away, and also the Romans themselves were led into Campania captives. After which devastation Rome was so desolate, that, for forty days or more, there was to be seen in it not a single inhabitant, but only wild beasts⁹.’” “It was the destiny of Rome,” says the same writer who quotes these passages, “to be as pre-eminent in the disasters of Italy, as she had been in its triumphs. To beleaguer, plunder, and make desolate the queen of empire, had been the grand object of ambition, a kind of inspired mania, which every invader, from Alaric,” —and Alaric the Goth, it will be recollected, had been followed by Attila the Hun and Genseric the Vandal, —“from Alaric, who found it a boundless aggregation of palaces, baths, theatres, and temples, peopled by the aristocracy of the earth, down to Totila, who left it ‘a marble wilderness.’

“The elements themselves,” he goes on to say, “conspired to put the last hand to the work of destruction.” And he refers to a prophecy attributed to St. Benedict, in the second book of the Dialogues of Gregory the Great, which said, that

⁸ De Bell. Goth. lib. iii. c. 22. ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἄνθρωπον οὐδένα εἶσας, ἀλλ' ἔρημον αὐτὴν το-

πάραπαν ἀπολιπών.

⁹ Marcel. in Chron. p. 54.

“Rome was not to be exterminated by the hands of barbarians; but that, exhausted by tempests, whirlwinds of fire, and earthquakes, it should of itself collapse into a heap of ruins¹ ;” and Gregory himself, “in one of his discourses to the people, appeals to the scenes by which they were actually surrounded, to prove the truth of this prediction.” In the words of the historian of the Decline and Fall, “‘The lofty tree, under whose shade the nations of the earth had reposed, was deprived of its leaves and branches, and the sapless trunk was left to wither on the ground.’ The Romans in the city, ‘shut or opened their gates with a trembling hand, beheld from the walls the flames of their houses, and heard the lamentations of their brethren, who were coupled together like dogs, and dragged away into distant slavery beyond the sea and the mountains; . . . and the Campagna of Rome was speedily reduced to the state of a dreary wilderness, in which the land is barren, the waters are impure, and the air is infectious. Curiosity and ambition no longer attracted the nations to the capital of the world; but if chance or necessity directed the steps of a wandering stranger, he contemplated with horror

¹ [“Præterea Canusinæ Antistes ecclesiæ ad eundem Dei famulum (Benedictum) venire consueverat, quem vir Dei pro vitæ suæ merito valde diligebat. Is itaque, dum cum illo de ingressu regis Totilæ et Romanæ urbis perditione colloquium haberet, dixit: Per hunc regem civitas ista destruetur, ut jam ampliùs non inhabitetur. Cui vir Domini respondit: Roma à gentibus non exterminabitur, sed tem-

pestatibus coruscis, et turbibus ac terræ motu fatigata, in semetipsa marcescet. Cujus prophetiæ mysteria nobis jam facta sunt luce clariora, qui in hac urbe dissoluta moenia, eversas domos, destructas ecclesias turbine cernimus, ejusque ædificia longo senio lassata, quia ruinis crebrescentibus prosternantur, videmus.”—S. Greg. Dial. lib. ii. cap. 15. (Op. t. ii. p. 239. ed. Bened.)]

the vacancy and solitude of the city, and might be tempted to ask, Where is the senate, and where are the people²?

“Such,” continues the Romanist, resuming his own reflections upon the scene which the pen of the historian had thus described, “such was the condition of the Eternal City, when the successors of the fisherman were induced, not by ambition, but through mercy, to take it under their protection; and if those regions along the Tiber, which had been the theatre, for so many centuries, of all that was most illustrious and important in human affairs, have not reverted to a state of aboriginal wildness and solitude, similar to that in which they were when first explored by the shepherd king, Evander, it is to the popes, as successors of the fisherman, the credit must be given. ‘Like Thebes, or Babylon, or Carthage,’” in the words of Gibbon, whom he cites, “‘the name of Rome might have been erased from the earth, if the city had not been animated by a vital principle which again restored her to honour and dominion³.’”

It was not, then,—if there be truth in the word of Prophecy,—it was not, it could not be, the ravages of the Goth which had been delineated in the visions of St. John. Rome *did* rise again from the apparent destruction which then threatened to make her, like Babylon of old, a perpetual desolation. But the marvellous revival, which makes her, to her own votaries, an object of religious wonder and admiration, will rather, to the thoughtful student of prophecy, suggest the startling con-

² Gibbon, chap. 45.

Paganism, &c.,” vol. ii. pp.

³ “Rome, as it was under 276, 277.

sideration, whether the very phenomenon presented to his view in the history be not the selfsame, and none other, which the Prophetic Spirit hath traced in such fearful outline, and made the subject of such solemn warning.

And, when the Romanist endeavours to draw his argument from Prophecy, representing “the church built on Peter,” meaning thereby the communion of Rome, as itself the stone cut out without hands, which smote the image of worldly dominion, and became a mountain, and filled the whole earth,—itself that kingdom of the God of heaven, which was to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and to stand for ever⁴; *he* will be proof against the argument who, carefully studying and comparing, one with another, the visions of Daniel and St. John,—beginning from that which was seen by the great king of the ancient Babylon, and ending with the revelation of the mystic Babylon, vouchsafed to the beloved disciple in the isle of his banishment, at the time when the fourth and last monarchy of Daniel’s vision possessed the earth,—can trace, not obscurely, the order of God’s providential government, and His wonderful designs of mercy, as they have been revealed in Sacred Prophecy and unfolded in the world’s history. Such an one can distinguish plainly there the one true Church of God, the holy Catholic Church, in the faith of which he was bap-

⁴ See “Rome as it was under Paganism, &c.,” vol. i. pp. 157, 158. “And yet is Rome destined to be an ‘eternal city,’ imperishable as the world itself, over which its sceptre shall still be wielded; for mark the conclusion of the

prophecy: ‘And the stone’ (cut without hands from a mountain, the Church built on Peter, taken, as it were, from the side of the Redeemer . . .) ‘became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.’ ”

tized, and in the existenee of which he continually declares his belief; that Church which, “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the corner stone⁵,” was to be the great scene of God’s providential dealings, and that whereby, as the apostle hath told us, was to be “made known” “unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places” “the manifold wisdom of God⁶ ;” —the one Church *truly* “Catholic,” planted in all lands by Christ’s apostles and by those who followed them, and *truly* “Apostolic,” as having been so planted, according to Christ’s own commission given to the whole Apostolic company, and not only to one their chief. To such an one, the prophetic roll unfolding itself will exhibit, not obscurely, the conflict of this Church of Christ with the world; the victory which, through suffering and martyrdom, it at length attained over the Pagan Empire of Rome, the last of the four great kingdoms of the ancient world; and then, how, amidst fresh forms of assault, violent or crafty, from the great adversary, “the earth,” which had once, through God’s providential goodness, “helped the woman,” His true Church, afterwards raised up against her a subtle enemy; and that which before had sheltered her now displayed to view a false counterfeit, disguising under a fair exterior inward corruption, possessed of a fatal power of fascination, an enchantress with a golden cup in her hand, making the nations drunken. And the vision would seem to be but too faithfully realized, if there were found enthroned in the seat of Roman empire a church, not merely claiming and receiving of the powers of this world, as were

⁵ Eph. ii. 20.⁶ Eph. iii. 10.

her due and duty, that recognition and maintenance of her spiritual authority, that protection and support, which the word of Prophecy had foretold, and thereby commanded, when it was said to the mystic Sion, the Church of Christ, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers⁷;" nor simply employing the powers of the world unseen, and the awe inspired by the Church in her unearthly character, to protect the weak against the strong, and restrain tyrannical violence,—services which, we shall readily acknowledge, in ages of barbarism, Rome often and signally rendered;—not thus, unhappily, too often, but, as the annals of her history painfully shew, according to the imagery in which the vision depicts the mystic Babylon, prostituting (for so, alas! it must be said) spiritual power to earthly, temporal ends; making a trade and a gain of things which should have been kept inviolably pure and sacred; turning into a traffic and a merchandise the power of the keys, the remission of guilt, or of its anticipated penalties in the world unseen; buying the favour of kings and princes, by lending the sanction of her authority to deeds of oppression and cruelty, or designs of rebellious usurpation, or ambitious schemes of conquest.

It has been my endeavour, in the Course of Lectures which has now reached its conclusion, to trace, at least by a faint outline, that wonderful scheme and order of Divine agency which, as delineated in the visions of Daniel and St. John, seems to find its counterpart, not obscurely revealed, in the

⁷ Isa. xlix. 23.

eventful history of the Church of Christ, and of that world which has been, and is still, the appointed scene of her triumphs and her trial. Such a course of inquiry seemed most strictly to fulfil the intention of the distinguished Founder of this Lecture, who named as its subject, "the prophecies relating to the Christian Church, and in particular the apostacy of Papal Rome." And the examination, with this view, of the prophecies of Daniel and St. John appeared to be the more important, not only because the subjects proposed for our consideration are in no other part of Scripture so fully unfolded, in their several relations to each other; but also because, of late years, doubts have been entertained in regard to the fulfilment, in past events, of some of those prophecies, of the earlier prophet in particular, the actual or unfolding accomplishment of which has generally, and (as I have endeavoured to shew) not without good and solid grounds, been regarded as forming, in combination with other predictions concerning which no doubt is felt, one of those strong and immovable pillars of evidence on which our most holy Faith may securely rest.

But if it is from other assaults than that of open infidelity that our special trial, in these days, may be expected to arise; if the danger to the simplicity and steadfastness of our faith, as members of Christ and of His Church, be from the arts of that rival communion which, while she studies to allure the simple by the display of her attractions, blinds them fearfully, through her falsehoods, to the very recognition of truth, or the sense of its intrinsic beauty, and of its claims on our admiration and love; or if, on the other hand, our peril be lest, in a just abhor-

rence of religious error, and in forgetfulness that, to the undiscerning eye, there must ever be an apparent resemblance between the counterfeit and the true, (or the counterfeit would deceive no one,) we should become cold in our attachment, or waver in our allegiance to her, that one holy Church, who, in her meek, and chaste, and heavenly adorning, “in the beauty of holiness,” is commended to our reverential love as the very spouse of Christ Himself; our security against the devices of the enemy, whether on the right hand or on the left, will be found in the faithful and diligent study of God’s holy word, with the lights of early times and of all past ages; and especially in unfolding thoughtfully the inspired roll of Prophecy, and tracing there the scenes which it delineates, as they are reflected, (so far, at least, as it is permitted us to discern them,) in that other wonderful record of God’s dealings with men, the history of His Church on earth, from its earliest and purest days down to our own times.

Studied in this spirit, the revelations of Sacred Prophecy will have none other than an elevating, and calming, and sanctifying influence upon the mind that holds converse with them. There will be nothing of bitterness engendered, no exasperation of controversial strife, even though it should appear, as I think it must, in opposition to an opinion which I noticed at the outset of our inquiry⁸, that Prophecy does take cognizance of divisions and corruptions *within* the Church of God. And most mercifully, indeed, as we must thankfully

⁸ Lecture I. pp. 5—8.

acknowledge, has such a provision been made, to strengthen men's spirits,—for who shall say they needed not such strengthening?—when, as was the case in this our land, when the time of Reformation was come, they felt themselves called, as by a divine Voice, to cast off the bands with which the enchantress had bound them, and restore the Church of their fathers to the possession of that spiritual freedom which, in accordance with ancient principles and the peculiar privileges of her inheritance, she had enjoyed from the beginning⁹. And the like heavenly strength is needed still, whenever, by the display of those pretensions which her rival and adversary knows so well how to put forth,—her would-be universal empire, the number of her followers, the gifts which she has to bestow, the indulgence in all that her votaries can desire, whether earthly or spiritual, free scope for every taste and faculty, the satisfying of every longing—she would lead after her the whole world captive, and endeavour even thereby to persuade men that she is the true and only Church, the immaculate spouse of Christ. They, and they only, will be secure against all her arts, who know that there is a Church whose character and attributes she would exclusively assume, even “the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem¹,” concerning which we, who by His mercy have been made members of a true and living branch of that one Church Catholic, may,

⁹ See Bramhall's “Just Vindication of the Church of England,” chap. v. (of the Cyprian privileges, &c.) “That the Britannic Churches were ever exempted from foreign

jurisdiction for the first six hundred years, and so ought to continue.” (Works, pp. 77—85.) Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. (chap. iii. p. 106.) &c.

¹ Heb. xii. 22.

with assured comfort and stedfast confidence, say, that she “is the mother of us all².”

And to the consummation of that one true Catholic Church of Christ in perfect purity and holiness and bliss, the vision bids us look onward with faithful and joyful hope. From the description of the choral song at the awful view of the Divine judgments on Babylon the Great, the vision at once proceeds: “And the four-and-twenty elders,” the representatives of the Church Universal,—“and the four living creatures,”—the symbols of earthly power and dominion, made finally subject to Christ and His kingdom (and they are mentioned here for the last time)—“fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb³.” “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband⁴.”

² Gal. iv. 26.

³ Chap. xix. 4—9.

⁴ Chap. xxi. 2.

The beloved disciple had been carried away in the spirit into the wilderness to see the vision of the corrupt Church, the great city which reigned over the kings of the earth, and it had been said to him, "Come hither, and I will shew thee the judgment of the great harlot, that sitteth upon the many waters⁵;" and now, by "one of the same seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues," it was said to him, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife⁶." "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and twelve gates, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel," and the wall of the city having "twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb⁷;"—the true Church of Christ, Catholic and Apostolic, including all the families of the one spiritual Israel, and whose foundations were laid by Christ's own apostles; the Church now no longer militant in earth, but glorified in heaven.

And "blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book⁸." For HE saith, who gave it by the ministry of His disciple, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his

⁵ Chap. xvii. 1.

⁶ Chap. xxi. 9.

⁷ Ibid. vv. 10—14.

⁸ Chap. xxii. 7.

commandments, that they may have right unto the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city⁹.”

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen ¹.”

⁹ Ibid. vv. 12 — 14.

¹ Eph. iii. 20, 21.

APPENDIX.

LECTURE I.

Page 14, Note 6.—(Comp. p. 17, Note 2.) In the preface to his later work, Dean Woodhouse thus states “the rules or canons, which in the former work were proposed by” him, “as the chart and compass” (to use his own words) “to direct my course, in the untried sea upon which I was about to embark.” “In entering upon this most important consideration, the question which first commanded my attention was, ‘From what source can we reasonably expect to derive the safest and surest means of understanding the figurative prophetic language of the Apocalypse?’ The proper answer appeared obvious; for if the Apocalypse be of Divine revelation, an uniformity may be expected to subsist between this and other portions of Sacred Scripture. . . . This, then, was the first principle upon which I resolved to ground my method of investigation;—*to compare the language, the symbols, the predictions, of the Apocalypse with those of former revelations; and to admit only such interpretation as should appear to have the sanction of this Divine authority.*

“A second controlling principle seems necessary. For, as the language, symbols, and predictions thus interpreted by the assistance of Scripture, were to be applied afterwards to historical facts, a preliminary question seemed to occur,—To what kind of history are they to be applied? to profane history or sacred? to the extensive and boundless mass of the Gentile history, or, exclusively, to that of God’s chosen people? To assist me in answering this question, I had recourse to the preceding prophecies of the Old and New Testament. How have we been autho-

rized to explain these? In what kind of history do they appear to have been accomplished? The answer was at hand—*The history of the Church of God*. For in this sacred history we find the Divine prophecies principally, and almost exclusively fulfilled: for, whenever sacred prophecy is seen to deviate from this its peculiar object, it is in such instances only, wherein the fortunes of God's people have become necessarily involved with those of heathen nations. Therefore the prophecies of the Apocalypse appeared to be applicable principally, if not solely, to the fates and fortunes of the Christian Church. And I conceived myself bound to adopt, as a controlling principle of interpretation, that *unless the language and symbols of the Apocalypse should, in particular passages, direct, or evidently require, another mode of application, the predictions were to be applied to events occurring in the progressive kingdom of Christ*.

“In the wide field of universal history, innumerable events may be selected by the industry of investigators, seeming to bear resemblance to the figurative pictures of Holy Writ. Some restriction is therefore necessary to guide investigation; and what can be deemed more proper than this principle, which derives its authority from the analogy of Sacred Scripture?

“A third controlling principle seemed also requisite, arising from a consideration of the nature and kind of that kingdom which had thus appeared to be the grand object of the prophecies. It is a kingdom not temporal, but spiritual;

“Such a kingdom may be, in a great degree, independent of the fates and revolutions of empires; affected only by those changes in the political world which are calculated to produce the increase or decline of religious knowledge, and of pure profession and practice.

“In adopting the rule now under consideration, I have been obedient to the direction of Holy Scripture, which has required a spiritual interpretation of its mysteries, (1 Cor. ii. 12—15:) they are not to be taken according to the bare letter, (2 Cor. iii. 6,) nor in a carnal and worldly acceptation (John vi. 26—63).

“From these considerations, this third rule of interpretation may be thus expressed:—

“3. *That as the kingdom of Christ, the object of the Apocalyptic prophecies, is spiritual, so they are to be understood in a spiritual sense. Spiritual things are to be compared with spiritual, as says St. Paul (1 Cor. ii. 13).* A fourth general rule of interpretation has been also adopted in the prosecution of this work. Not to attempt the particular explanation of prophecies which remain yet to be fulfilled.”—Preface to Annotations, pp. xvi—xxiii.

LECTURE II.

Page 25, Note 3.—Josephus thus gives the interpretation by Daniel of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision. “The head of gold signified thee, and the Babylonian kings which were before thee; and the two hands and shoulders indicate that your empire shall be dissolved by two kings: and their empire shall another (conqueror) destroy, coming from the west, clad in brass; and the strength of this empire shall another put an end to, which shall be like unto iron, and shall have power over all, because of the strength of iron, inasmuch as it is more firm than gold, and silver, and brass. Daniel also explained to the king concerning the stone; but I have not thought fit to relate this, my business being to give a history of things past and done, and not to write of things future. But if any one, eager after truth, will not give over concerning himself about it, so as to be desirous to learn concerning things obscure whether they will happen, let him carefully read the book of Daniel, which he will find among our sacred writings.”—Antiq. Jud. lib. x. cap. 10, 4. It is sufficiently clear, from the reserve which Josephus shews, what he understood by the fourth empire. Evidently, as Bp. Chandler observes, “he had a better reason than he gave: he feared to offend the power in being, whose protection he needed, and which, he foresaw, must be offended, if he should publish the hope of his captive

nation, one day to subdue their conquerors.”—Defence of Christianity, p. 105.

Page 27, Note 9.—Theodoret thus proceeds:—“Some writers, then, (τινὲς τοίνυν τῶν συγγραφέων) have said that the fourth kingdom, that is the iron, is Alexander the Macedonian; and that the feet, and toes of the feet, composed of iron and clay, are the Macedonians who reigned after him, of the lines of Ptolemy, and Seleucus, and Antiochus, and Demetrius, of whom some held sway feebly, and some with great power, and made intermarriages, and embraced mutual alliance. But they ought to have perceived, in the first place, that the head of gold he declared to be Nebuchadnezzar, that is, the kingdom of the Babylonians or Assyrians. And this was succeeded by the kingdom of the Persians and Medes at once; for Cyrus was sprung from both nations, and ruling over the one and the other, having destroyed (καταλύσας) the kingdom of the Babylonians, ruled over the Persians. And the kingdom of the Persians, being the second, Alexander the Macedonian destroys (καταλύει); and of him the blessed Daniel speaks as ruling over the whole earth. This kingdom he named the third, and it was succeeded by none other than that of the Romans. They ought, therefore, in the first place, from the number, and from the further circumstances which are shewn, to have understood and perceived, that the kingdom of the Macedonians, that is the brass, is the third, and that of the Romans the fourth. And even if these points appeared to them to be less certain, at least from the event they ought to have discerned plainly the whole prediction. For, immediately after having shewn the weak and clayey end of the iron kingdom, he added (v. 44,) ‘And in the days of those kings,’ &c.”

Page 30, Note 8.—The objections which have been made to the use of this passage from Sulpicius Severus in illustration of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision (see Todd’s Discourses, p. 51, Note), are met by the distinction, which must be carefully observed, between the two ideas, of the

division of the empire, in the sense in which it is said to be "divided" (Dan. ii. 41) in regard to its component elements, as being "part of potter's clay and part of iron," and its division, in another sense, and at a later period, into ten kingdoms.

Page 32, Note 3.—With the passages quoted from St. Jerome and St. Cyril (sup. pp. 27, 28; cf. pp. 66, 67), testifying to the general tradition, and also the quotations from Irenæus (ibid.) and Hippolytus (pp. 29. 352), compare Tertullian, de Resurr. Carnis, cap. 24: ("Donec de medio fiat quis, nisi Romanus status? cujus abscessio in decem reges dispersa Antichristum superducet.") Also S. Chrysost. in 2 Thess. ii., Ephrem Syrus, Serm. Ascet. Op. t. i. p. 44. &c.

Page 33, Note 7.—We find, in the sixth century, Cosmas Indicopleustes opposing the received interpretation (Christian. Opinio de Mundo, lib. ii. ap. Montfaucon. Collect. Nov. Pat. t. ii. pp. 145, 146). But his writings give proof that he is no authority on questions of interpretation of prophecy; while some of his views anticipate those which have been, unhappily, too prevalent in modern times.

Page 36, Note 4.—The question is, Which are the kings referred to, when it is said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," &c.? "This is explained," says Dr. Todd (Discourses, p. 53), "to signify that, in the days of the kings who shall be at the head of its several subdivisions," *i. e.* the ten subdivisions of the fourth kingdom, "'the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom,' &c." He adds, in a note, "So verse 44 is generally understood, if we adopt the reading of the present Chaldee text. Dr. Gill," whom he goes on to quote, "says:—

"*And in the days of these kings, &c.*] Not of the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian kings, nor indeed of the old Roman kings or emperors; but in the days of these ten kings or kingdoms into which the Roman em-

pire is divided, signified by the ten toes of different power and strength.'— Gill on the Prophets, Vol. ii. p. 273, col. 2. fol. Lond. 1758."

For this interpretation, however, I do not find any authority. The general consent of interpreters would seem rather to understand the words to mean, "during the succession of these *four* monarchies, and in the times of the *last* of them." (Lowth.) Dr. Maitland ("Attempt," &c. p. 7) observes of the fourth kingdom, that "it is stated that it shall be, at its beginning, strong as iron, but afterwards 'divided,' " adding, "I presume we are to understand 'divided' among kings, for it is said (ver. 44), 'In the days of these kings;' but no kings had been previously mentioned, unless it be thus by implication. (4.) It is added, that 'they' (I presume these kings) 'shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another.' (5.) That in the days of these kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom, which shall break in pieces and consume all the others, and stand for ever." From the fact, which Dr. Maitland notices, that "no other kings had been mentioned" but the four (see Lecture), it seems to me the natural and legitimate conclusion, that those four are intended. Of interpreters I will only quote St. Chrysostom, who gives his undoubting interpretation of the words ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῶν βασιλέων ἐκείνων—τῶν Ῥωμαίων δηλονότι. He proceeds to answer the question, πῶς τὰς ἤδη σβεσθείσας βασιλείας καθαιρεῖ;—ἀλλὰ τὸ καθαιρεῖν ἑτέρας ἐν αἷς αἰ τοιαῦταί εἰσιν, εἰκότως ἐμποιεῖ. Op. tom. vi. p. 216.

Page 39, Note 4.—In Matt. xxi. 44 (cf. Luke xx. 18), the language of the former clause (καὶ ὁ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τὸν λίθον τοῦτον, συνθλασθήσεται) would recal to mind that of Isai. viii. 14, 15; xxviii. 13; but then follows, ἐφ' ὃν δ' ἂν πέσῃ, λικμήσει αὐτόν. Schleusner (Lex. N. T. in voc.) gives as the sense of λικμάω, "1) propriè: *ventilo triticum, ita ut minutæ partes in auras dispergantur, frumentum purgo, cribro, glumas et paleas à frumento ventilando separo*, à λικμὸς, οὐ, ὁ, *ventilabrum, vannus*. In hac significatione respondet apud Alexandrinos Hebr. וַתִּיֵּן ven-

tilavit frumentum. Ruth iii. 2 . . 2), metaphoricè : *contero, comminuo et instar palearum dissipō, disjicio*, et ex adjuncto : *penitus perdo, deleo.* Bis tantum legitur in N. T. Matt. xxi. 44, ἐφ' ὃν δ' ἂν πέσῃ, λικμήσει αὐτόν, . . . Luc. xx. 18. In utroque loco sermo est de interitu ac pœnis adversariorum religionis Christianæ, maxime Judæorum. Dan. ii. 44, λεπτυνεῖ καὶ λικμήσει πάσας τὰς βασιλείας, ubi Chald. ܩܕܝܬܐ [ܩܕܝܬܐ] a ܩܕܝܬܐ *consumo*, respondet." Cf. Lex. Vet. Test. in voc. λικμάω. The sense of the words λικμήσει αὐτόν in the two evangelists, is, in fact, that which is fully developed in the words in Daniel (ver. 35), "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and *became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.*"

Page 40, Note 5.—So Rosenmüller (Schol. in loc.) who, however, observes, "Interpretum plures, et Judæi et Christiani, quarto hoc regno Romanum intelligunt, quam sententiam nostra ætate pluribus commendavit Io. Casp. Velthusen in Animadverss. ad Dan. ii. 27—45, Helmstad. 1783, repet. in Commentatt. Theol. a Kuinoelio editis, Vol. v. p. 361, seqq." Rosenmüller, however, mentions another quite novel hypothesis, proposed by Harenberg, who would make the succession of kings to be the sons and grandsons of Nebuchadnezzar, his successors in the empire of Babylon, and the stone which smote the image to be Cyrus. "Quam sententiam," he says, "sese probasse miror Doederleinio in Notis ad Grotii Annotatt. vs. 34, et Scharfenbergio in 'Animadverss. in Daniel.' p. 35. Quatuor partium statuæ, quæ Nebucadnezari in somnio apparuit, eadem est ratio, qualis quatuor animalium, quæ Daniel in somnio vidit, cap. vii. Iis autem non quatuor singulos reges, sed quatuor imperia significari, perspicuum est ex vss. 23, 24, illius capitis."

In regard to the four empires, and the Catholic Church viewed as a kingdom, see Archdeacon Wilberforce's interesting volume, "The Five Empires."

LECTURE III.

Page 74, Note 6.—The promise made to Abraham (in Gen. xv. 18—21), including the whole land “from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates,” makes mention of “the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.” In Exod. xxiii. 23, the nations of the land of Canaan are enumerated as consisting of “the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites;” and the same in chap. xxxiii. 11. In Deut. vii. 1, are recounted the names of “seven nations,” the Girgashites being added to the six above named. In Joshua i. 4, it is said, “From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.” In Neh. ix. 8, where the covenant made with Abraham is referred to, the land promised to his seed is described as “the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites.” Other instances of a somewhat similar kind might be cited.

In regard to the Gothic nations and the ten kingdoms, I cannot do better than refer to the following passage from an unquestionable authority in this matter, Bossuet. In his commentary on Rev. xvii. 12, he says :—

“L’auteur du commentaire sur l’Apocalypse attribué à Saint Ambroise, et que nous avons vu être Bérangaude, écrivain du septième siècle (Préf. n. 7), dit clairement que par ces dix rois sont designés dix royaumes, ‘par qui l’empire romain’ a été détruit; et il compte ces destructeurs au nombre de dix, qui sont ‘les Perses et les Sarrasins devenus maîtres de l’Asie; les Vandales de l’Afrique; les Goths de l’Espagne; les Lombards de l’Italie; les Bourguignons de la Gaule; les Français de la Germanie; les Huns de la Pannonie; les Alains et les Suèves de

beaucoup d'autres pays qu'ils ont ravagés.' Il faut donc entendre par ces dix rois, ceux qui ruinèrent Rome, et en démembrèrent l'empire, principalement en Occident. Le nombre de dix est grand pour des rois ; et il est vrai que l'Occident est déchiré presque en même temps par un grand nombre de rois qui composent de grands royaumes de ces débris de l'empire. On voit paroître à peu près dans le même temps les Vandales, les Huns, les Francs, les Bourguignons, les Suèves, les Alains, les Hérules, à qui succèdent les Lombards, les Allemands, les Saxons ; plus que tous ceux-là, les Goths, qui sont les vrais destructeurs de l'empire. Rien ne force à se tourmenter, pour les réduire précisément au nombre de dix, encore qu'on les y pût à peu près réduire par rapport aux royaumes fixes qu'ils ont établis. *Mais un des secrets de l'interprétation des prophètes, est de ne pas chercher de finesse où il n'y en a point, et de ne se pas perdre dans les minuties, quand on trouve de grands caractères qui frappent la vue d'abord. . . .* Ici, sans qu'il soit besoin d'un plus grand detail, c'est un caractère assez remarquable, que d'un seul empire il se forme tant de grands royaumes, en diverses provinces d'Espagne, en Afrique, dans la Gaule Celtique, dans la Séquanoise, dans la Grande-Bretagne, dans la Pannonie, dans l'Italie, et ailleurs ; et que l'empire romain soit abattu dans sa source, c'est-à-dire, en Occident où il est né, non point par un seul prince qui commande en chef, comme il arrive ordinairement, mais par l'inondation de tant d'ennemis qui agissent tous indépendamment les uns des autres."

Page 75, Note 8.—Theodoret's language, in particular, is very strong. 'Ο μὲν οὖν μακάριος Δανιήλ ταῦτα ἡμᾶς ἐδίδαξεν· ἐγὼ δὲ, τῶν Ἰουδαίων κατηγορίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἀφείς, θαυμάζω κομιδῇ τῶν τῆς εὐσεβείας διδασκάλων τινὰς Μακεδονικὴν βασιλείαν τὸ τέταρτον θηρίον ἀποκαλέσαντας· ἔδει γὰρ αὐτοὺς συνιδεῖν κ. τ. λ. . . . Λείπεται τοίνυν τὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν βασιλείαν νοεῖν τὸ τέταρτον θηρίον· ἐν γὰρ τῇ ταύτης τέλει, οἱ μὲν δέκα βασιλεῖς κατὰ ταῦτὸν ἀναστήσονται κ. τ. λ.—Comment. in Dan. cap. vii. Op. t. ii. p. 639. ed. Paris.

Page 78, Note 1.—The passage quoted from St. Jerome in the text, with the remarkable enumeration which it contains of *ten* barbarous nations, has been noticed by Bossuet, in his tract “De Excidio Babylonis.” Following up the observations, quoted above, from his commentary on the Apocalypse, he observes: “Sanè magna imperia labefactari solent per magnum quendam ducem, certâ imperii sede profectum. . . . Non ita solutum est imperium Romanum; sed nullo certo victore, *decem plus minùsve* reges *totidem regnorum* conditores, nullo inter se juncti fœdere, prædonum instar Romanas provincias invaserunt, Româque et Italiâ potiti sunt, ubi sedes erat imperii: unde ex provinciis, præsertim occidentalibus, nova regna, eaque amplissima et notissima, et ab omnibus historicis memorata, conflata sunt. . . . In promptu est commemorare Visigothos, Hunnos, Herulos, Longobardos, Burgundiones, Francos, Suevos, Alanos quasi repente suscitatos. . . . Ad hunc regum decem locum Hieronymus alludebat, cùm imperio occidentali Romano, jam ante expugnatam imminentes, Quados, Vandalos, Sarmatas, Alanos, Gepidos, Herulos, Saxones, Burgundos, Alemannos, Pannonios, ad denarium numerum redigebat, ut numeranti patebit.”—Œuvres de Bossuet, t. iv. pp. 76, 77 (ed. Versailles, 1815).

Page 80, Note 8.—In a note by Dr. Jelf, on that part of Bp. Jewel’s Reply to Harding in which he is treating of the supremacy, and of the testimony of Gregory the Great against the title of “Universal Bishop,” “the reader is advised,” by the learned and careful editor, “to peruse Gregory’s Letters upon this subject entire; he will thus,” Dr. Jelf observes, “be still better enabled,” even than by Bp. Jewel’s summary, “to appreciate the nature and extent of that pope’s indignation at the very idea of *any* human being assuming a name which belongs only to Christ himself.” (Works of Bp Jewel, Vol. ii. p. 143, note.) There are not fewer than ten letters of Gregory on this subject, viz., lib. v. ep. 18 (Ad Johannem Episcopum); ep. 19 (Ad Sabinianum Diaconum); ep. 20 (Ad Mauricium Augustum); ep. 21 (Ad Constantinam

Augustam); ep. 43 (Ad Eulogium et Anastasium Episcopos); lib. vii. ep. 27 (Ad Anastasium Episcopum); ep. 31 (Ad Cyriacum Episcopum); ep. 33 (Ad Mauricium Augustum); lib. viii. ep. 30 (Ad Eulogium Episcopum Alexandrinum); lib. xiii. ep. 40 (Ad Cyriacum Patriarcham Constantinopol.).—(Op. t. ii. ed. Bened.)

Page 80, Note 9.—For the origin and history of Odoacer, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, and the Lombards, respectively, see Gibbon, chaps. 34 and 36, chap. 39, and chap. 42.

Page 80, Note 1.—That a minute historical view will bear out the sketch referred to in the Lecture, will appear to any one who will follow out the history in Gibbon. It will there be seen how “Odoacer was the first barbarian who reigned in Italy, over a people who had once asserted their just superiority above the rest of mankind;” and how, although “the king of Italy was not unworthy of the high station to which his valour and fortune had exalted him,” “a monarchy destitute of national union and hereditary right hastened to its dissolution;” and, “after a reign of fourteen years, Odoacer was oppressed by the superior genius of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths; a hero alike excellent in the arts of peace and prosperity, and whose name still excites and deserves the attention of mankind.”—Chap. 36 (vol. iii. pp. 500. 504).

Following on the history, it will appear how “Italy revived and flourished under the government of a Gothic king, who might have deserved a statue among the best and bravest of the ancient Romans;” the “enterprise” which he undertook having had this for its object (in the words which he addressed to Zeno), to rescue “Italy, the inheritance of the emperor’s predecessors, and Rome itself, the head and mistress of the world,” from “the violence and oppression of Odoacer the mercenary.”—Chap. 39 (vol. iv. pp. 2. 9).

Finally, it will be seen, in the further progress of the history, how “Alboin undertakes the conquest of Italy;” and, under its Lombard oppressors, “the expiring dignity

of Rome was only marked by the freedom and energy of her complaints.”—Chap. 45 (vol. iv. pp. 425. 441).

Page 82, Note 5.—Mr. Charles Butler enters, at some length, in the Notes subjoined to his historical sketch, on the discussion of “the lawfulness of the dethronement of Childeric by Pepin, and the lawfulness of the elevation of Charlemagne to the Empire of the West, in exclusion of the Greek emperors.” “Few subjects,” he observes, “formerly occasioned more discussion than these questions, and this discussion” had “been revived by the” then “recent occurrences in France.” He goes on to say, “It presents two distinct subjects for consideration, the conduct of Pepin and Charlemagne, and the conduct of the Popes.”

With regard to the former, he admits that, “I. A more unjust usurpation than that of *Pepin* can scarcely be imagined.” It was, as he fully proves, “an act of glaring injustice.” (He contends, on the other hand, that “no objection lies to the justice of *Charlemagne’s* assumption of the Western Empire.”)

“II. In respect to the conduct of *the popes* towards Pepin and Charlemagne,” Mr. Butler observes, that “the various texts of ancient writers which throw any light on it, are collected by Launoy (*Opera*, tom. v. pars 2, l. 12. epist. 9. p. 477—487), and may be seen in the originals, in Dom Bouquet’s *Collection*, tom. v.” He says, that “to suppose that the popes, in the time of Pepin and Charlemagne, assumed a divine right to distribute kingdoms and principalities, is to ascribe to them the Hildebrandine principles, which the Roman see did not profess till three centuries afterwards. But even in the times of Pepin and Charlemagne,” he goes on to say, “the popes took on them to pronounce, that there are cases in which it was lawful for subjects to dethrone their sovereign and choose another; and also took on themselves to decide when these cases happened; and to ascribe the justice of the measure, in some degree, to the authority of their decision.” Mr. Butler proceeds to examine Father Daniel’s “apology for the pope and his

adherents" (Hist. de France, edit. 1755, vol. ii. p. 277), grounded on the necessity or expediency of the case, &c., which he pronounces "an exquisite morsel of casuistry;" for that, in fact, "it is only saying, in other words, that the end sanctified the means; a principle of the most dangerous tendency, and never more dangerous than when, as on an occasion like that under consideration, it is used to justify injustice done for the supposed good of religion.

"But it is by no means clear," says Mr. Butler, "that the popes acted on the principles suggested by Father Daniel. On the contrary, they appear to have decided the question by the genuine whiggish principle of the correlative rights and duties of allegiance and protection. They found that Pepin was in possession of all the powers of government; on the legality of his acquiring or continuing to hold them, their opinion was not required; the only fact stated to them was, that the sovereign power was in the hands of Pepin; with an intimation of the inability of the Merovingian princes to recover it. Upon this statement, their opinion was asked, whether, as Pepin had the power, it was lawful to give him the name, and to acquiesce in his exercising the functions, of king. To this they answered in the affirmative; and their answer, *in this view of the case*" (the italics are Mr. Butler's), "does them honour." Mr. Butler refers to the "*Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire Générale de l'Italie*," by the Abbé St. Marc.

Without entering here upon a discussion, on political grounds, of the questions here raised, it will appear sufficiently, from what has been said, how easily the power claimed by the Papacy might, in the further development of principles and progress of events, be enlisted in behalf of the most revolutionary theories and destructive movements of the "latter days."

Page 85, Note 4.—After some remarks on "the usurpation of Hugh Capet," which, Mr. Butler pronounces, "was less objectionable than Pepin's," he goes on to say (writing in the early part of the present century), "From

Hugh Capet the sceptre of France has been regularly transmitted to our time, in a course of hereditary descent from male to male: we have lived to behold its lamentable end. After a long scene of anarchy, Buonaparte has possessed himself of the vacant throne, and given the French monarchy the more splendid title of an empire; and Pius the Seventh has repeated, in his regard, at Paris, something like the splendid ceremonies which Zachary and Leo performed for Pepin and Charlemagne at Soissons and Rome."

Mr. Butler proceeds to consider this (at that time) recent instance of fresh relations between the Papacy and a new throne of empire reared out of a Gallican revolution. "The crimes and horrors of the preceding stages of the French revolution, or the deposition of Lewis the Sixteenth," he says, "it is impossible even to palliate;" but "in defence of Buonaparte's assumption of the sovereign power of France much may be alleged. The throne of France was vacant; the exiled princes had no visible means of regaining it; and it was manifest that nothing, but the strong arm of absolute power, could restore order and good government to the country, &c. &c. . . . After such a convulsion, if it were not necessary, it certainly was justifiable, for the pope to concur in any measure that tended to quiet the consciences of the timorous and establish general tranquillity. This appears to be the light in which the part he acted at Buonaparte's coronation should be viewed; and, viewing it in this light, whatever blame seems imputable to Pope Zachary, none seems to attach to Pope Pius the Seventh." The further proceedings of the pope and Buonaparte, in the ecclesiastical affairs of France, appealed against by some of the Gallican prelates, as contrary to the canons of the Church, Mr. Butler defends by the "'dominium altum,' or the right of providing for extraordinary cases by extraordinary acts of authority;" and that "'dominium altum' in the spiritual concerns of the Church," Roman Catholics could not, "consistently with their own principles, deny to the successor of St. Peter."

These passages of history, and the questions arising out

of them, as discussed by Romanists, are here referred to, simply to exhibit the position in which the see of Rome is liable continually to find itself placed, almost inevitably, as the immediate and necessary result of the extraordinary monarchical power, in things spiritual, to which it has laid claim.

Page 85, Note 5.—Chald. עַד הֵי כְרִסְוֹן רְמִי “*donec throni positi sunt.*” [Vulg.] Sed רְמִי Geierus et quidam alii interpretes reddunt *dejecti sunt*, quod verbum רָמָא non de collocatione decora, sed de violenta dejectione usurpatur supra iii. 6. 15. 20. 21. 24. vi. 17. . . . Ita vero anticiparetur quodammodo hujus visionis explicatio, quæ demum inde a versu 23. sequitur. Præterea quod statim Senex *consedis*se dicitur, arguit, eum insedis se uni illorum thronorum, qui igitur *collocati* esse debuerunt. Quemadmodum Hebræum יָרָה *jecit*, et *posuit*, *collocavit* denotat, ut Genes. xxxi. 51, הַמִּצְבָּה אֲשֶׁר יָרִיתִי *statua, quam collocavi*; ita et Chaldaicum רָמָא *jecit*, et *ponendi*, *collocandi* significatum obtinet; hinc Esr. vii. 24, et in Targum 2 Reg. xviii. 14, *imponere* tributum denotat. . . . *Collocandi* significationem et h. l. veteres omnes expresserunt. Throni autem illi destinati procul dubio erant assessoribus judicii, de quo vs. 10.” Rosenmüller, Schol. *in loc.* Cf. S. Chrysost. *in loc.* Εἴτα θρόνοι ἐτέθησαν οἱ θρόνοι ἐν οἷς καθήσεσθε, φησὶ, ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους. [Matt. xix. 28.] Comm. in Dan. Op. t. vi. p. 239.

LECTURE IV.

Page 99, Note 8.—Dr. Todd, in his careful and accurate notes, has shewn how manifold were the divisions of Alexander’s kingdom. It is but justice, however, if not to other expositors, at all events to Sir Isaac Newton, to say, that he states as fully (Observations, p. 170) as does

Dr. Todd in his summary (p. 175, Note *), the distribution of command which took place on Alexander's death. The turning point, however, in the history, in its relation to the prophecy, is when the successors of Alexander appeared as *kings*, having, in the language of the book of Maccabees, "put crowns upon themselves;" which, undoubtedly, was not *immediately* "after his death," but some seventeen years after. Then, as stated in Dr. Todd's summary, "after the murder of Alexander and the defeat of Ptolemy by Demetrius at sea, Antigonus and Demetrius take the title of king, and this example is imitated by Lysimachus, Ptolemy, Seleucus, and Cassander." Or, as Sir Isaac Newton states it, "upon a great victory at sea got by Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, over Ptolemy, Antigonus took upon himself the title of king, and gave the same title to his son. After his example, Seleucus, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Ptolemy, took upon themselves the title and dignity of kings, having abstained from this honour while there remained any of Alexander's race to inherit the crown. Thus the monarchy of the Greeks, for want of an heir, was broken into several *kingdoms*." (Cf. sup. p. 96.) Five years later was the battle of Ipsus, when Antigonus was slain, and his dominions divided between Lysimachus and Seleucus. Venema, whom Dr. Todd follows, says, "Antigonus, posteaquam Demetrius Ptolemæum ingente clade adfecisset, et Cyprum ei eripuisset, hoc rerum suarum successu elatus, *primus diadema sumsit*, et Demetrio quoque imposuit. Quod cum foederati mox imitarentur, *sex* reges subito in scenam prodierunt, Antigonus, Demetrius, Ptolemæus, Lysimachus, Cassander, et ultimus Seleucus, qui per orientem ditionis suæ pomœria jam dilataverat. Bello deinde majoribus utrinque viribus renovato, et prælio decretorio apud Ipsum in Phrygia commisso, Antigonus debellatus, et occisus, regnumque ejus extinctum est. Victores vero reges totum *Antigoni et Demetrii regnum*, ut verbis Plut. in Demetrio, p. 902, utar, 'sicut magnum corpus discerptum diviserunt inter se, suisque provinciis adjunxerunt.' Ex hac quarta et *ultima* divisione *Ptolemæus* regnum suum retinuit,

eique adjunxit Coelesyriam, Phœniciam, et Judæam; *Lysimachus* præter Thraciam accepit Bithyniam, aliasque regiones ad latus Asiaticum Hellesponti et Bospori, *Cassander* Macedoniam et Græciam consecutus est, *Seleucus* reliqua Asiæ, adeo ut ab eo tempore regnum Syro Macedonum condiderit." It would appear, from the very language in which the kingdom of Antigonus and Demetrius is here spoken of, that it was to be regarded as one; and we have then the *five*, including Seleucus, reduced, after the battle of Ipsus, to *four*. Venema adds, indeed, "Supererat Demetrius, multas in Asia regiones tenens, mox iis relictis Macedoniam occupans." He goes on, however, to say, "Cum vero regno Macedoniæ et Græciæ non contentus, Asiam invadere, et regnum paternum recuperare adgrederetur, Lysimachum, Ptolemæum, et Seleucum, foederatos in se concitavit: novique, sed sibi fatalis, belli semina jecit," &c.

Dr. Todd, no doubt, is fully borne out in the statement that the "divisions" of Alexander's empire were "extremely numerous, and" that "a more close inspection of the history will shew that it is impossible to fix upon any four of them (even if we consent to neglect the rest) that remained as kingdoms in the same condition for twenty years together" (p. 504). Still, I think, the history will be found to reflect the language of the prophecy, carefully considered in itself, declaring, as it does, simply that, in the place of the great horn, *came up* four *conspicuous* ones towards the four winds of heaven. And it will be recollected, that these kingdoms are only mentioned as preparatory to the description of the power which arose out of one of them,—out of that one which Venema specifies as founded by Seleucus, and dating from this final division of Alexander's empire.

It must be observed, also, in regard to the ancient expositors, that, when they spoke of the four kingdoms which arose out of Alexander's empire, they were not unmindful of its manifold division. St. Jerome distinctly notices it (as does also Theodoret), on the words (Dan. xi. 4), "his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those;" where, in the earlier part of the verse, it

had been said, "his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven." He says, "*Præter regna quattuor Macedoniae, Asiae, Syriae, et Ægypti, etiam in alios obscuriores et minores reges Macedonum regnum laceratum est. Significat autem Perdiccam, et Crateron, et Lysimachum. Nam Cappadocia, et Armenia, Bithynia, et Heraclia, Bosphorusque et aliae provinciae de potestate Macedonum recedentes, diversos sibi reges constituerunt.*"

Page 121, Note 5.—Vid. inf. Lecture X. p. 306, and Note.

LECTURE V.

Page 132, Note 9.—The views put forward in the "History of the Jews," in regard to the sacred history generally, and the *miracles* which it records in particular, attracted much attention at the time of its publication: I do not know that the manner in which it spoke of sacred *prophecy* was equally noticed. I refer to it here, in connexion with the immediate subject of these Lectures, as shewing how, if Neologianism find entrance amongst us, it will probably not directly deny the power of the prophetic Spirit, but tacitly resolve it into efforts of human genius or imagination, natural sagacity or political prescience. The historian's account of the prophets is as follows:—

"As the storm darkened over the Hebrew kingdom, the voices of the prophets became louder and more wild; those whose writings have been preserved in our sacred volume now come upon the scene. In their magnificent *lyric odes*, we have a *poetical history* of these momentous times, not merely *describing the fall* of the two Hebrew nations, but that of the adjacent kingdoms likewise. As each independent tribe or monarchy was swallowed up in the great universal empire of Assyria, the seers of Judah *watched the progress* of the invader, and uttered their

sublime funeral anthems over the greatness, and the prosperity, and independence of Moab and Ammon, Damascus, and Tyre. They were like the great tragic chorus to the awful drama which was unfolding itself in the eastern world. Nor did they confine their views to their own internal affairs, or to their own immediate neighbourhood. Jonah appeared as a man under Divine influence in Nineveh; and Nahum *described the subsequent fate* of that spacious city, in images which human imagination or human language have never surpassed.

“Still, in general, the poets of Judæa were pre-eminently national. It is on the existing state, the *impending dangers*, and *future prospects* of Ephraim and Judah, that they usually dwell. . . . In Judah, Joel *described* the successive calamities which desolated the country. But Isaiah not only took a great share in all the affairs of the successive reigns from Azariah to Hezekiah, *described or anticipated* all the wars, conquests, and convulsions, which attended the rise and fall of the Assyrian and Babylonian dynasties, but *penetrated still further into futurity*. To Isaiah may be traced the first clear and distinct intimations of the important influence to be exercised by the Jews on the destiny of mankind—the promise of the Messiah, and *the remote prospects of future grandeur*, which tended so strongly to form their national character, and are still the indissoluble bond which has held together this extraordinary people through centuries of dispersion, persecution, and contempt. Still blind to the fulfilment of all these predictions in the person and spiritual kingdom of Christ, the Jew, in every age and quarter of the world, dwells on the pages of his great national prophet, and with undying hope looks forward to the long-delayed coming of the Deliverer.”—Hist. of the Jews, vol. i. pp. 302—304.

The last sentence, happily, redeems what had gone before from the impression which would be derived from it, unaccompanied by the sequel.

Page 134, Note 4.—The manner in which this king is first mentioned has given rise to the idea, unfounded,

I think, of some error in the Hebrew original. It stands thus, "And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes, and he shall be strong above him" (Dan. xi. 5). "There is manifestly," says Bp. Newton, "either some redundance or some defect in the Hebrew copy; which should be rendered, as it is by the Seventy, 'And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes shall be strong above him;' or perhaps may better be rendered thus, 'And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and the king of the north shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion.'" It cannot be doubted, I think, that the subject of the latter part of the verse is Seleucus Nicator; but the text as it stands is more correct historically, than with the emendation which has been supposed to be necessary.

Page 135, Note 5.—Bp. Newton's observation, I am well aware, has been regarded as, in fact, a confession, "that the discrepancies and deficiencies of the original historians have made it less difficult for commentators to shape the history to their peculiar interpretations of prophecy." "In this way," it is said, "the prophecy has been used to give a colour to the history, and the history is then employed as an evidence for the interpretation given to the prophecy." (Todd, p. 176, note.) If, in any case, the statements of historians have been warped by expositors, to suit the sacred text of which they have supposed it to be the fulfilment, the process has, doubtless, been an inversion of that which is the correct and legitimate one; but it is the observation of St. Jerome himself, "Ad intelligendas autem extremas partes Danielis, *multiplex* Græcorum historia necessaria est." (Cf. sup. cit. p. 118, note 2.)

Page 135, Note 6.—'Αλλ' ὁμως, φησὶ, καὶ λίαν ὦν ἐξουθενημένος, μετὰ πολλῆς ἥξει περιουσίας καὶ πλείστης δυνάμεως, καὶ κρατήσῃ τῆς βασιλείας δόλῳ συνεργῶ, καὶ ἐξαπάτῃ μᾶλλον χρώμενος· τοῦτο δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ ὀπτασίᾳ ὁ μακάριος ἐθεάσατο Δανιήλ, καὶ ἤκουσε τοῦ ἁγίου

Γαβριὴλ λέγοντος· δόλος ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ μεγαλυνθήσεται· καὶ διαφθερεῖ πολλοὺς, καὶ ἐπὶ ἀπωλείᾳ πολλῶν στήσεται· καὶ ἐνταῦθα ὡσαύτως, Κατισχύσει γὰρ, φησὶ, βασιλείας ἐν ὀλισθήμασι.—Theodoret, *in loc.*

Page 142, Note 8.—Sir Isaac Newton says, in his comment on these words, “‘And after him arms,’ that is the Romans, ‘shall stand up.’ As **אַחֲרָיו** signifies ‘after the king,’ Dan. xi. 8, so **אַחֲרָיו** may signify ‘after him.’” Bishop Newton adds, in a note, “So **אַחֲרָיו** Nehem. xiii. 21, is ‘after that time,’ or ‘from that time forth.’ So likewise, in this very chapter, ver. 23, **אַחֲרָיו** is translated ‘after the league made with him.’ See the particle **אַחֲרָיו**, in Noldius and Taylor’s Concordance.”

In regard to these instances, it must be observed that, in Dan. xi. 8, the particle has the sense of ‘after’ only as implied in the construction of the clause, “he shall continue [more] years *than* the king of the north.” So also in Neh. xiii. 21, “*from* that time” is, no doubt, equivalent to “*after* that time.” So again, in v. 23 of this chapter, “*after* the league,” proceeding *from* the league, “made with him he shall work deceitfully.” But there is no perfect analogy between these cases and that in which it is proposed to render, “arms shall stand up *from* him,” as though it were equivalent to this, “arms shall stand up *after* him.” It has been suggested, however, that if the language of the original “be thought to require a closer connexion between Antiochus and the ‘arms’ here mentioned,” than is supplied by mere succession in time, “this existed in the case of the Romans, no less really than in that of Apollonius and his forces, who ravaged Jerusalem.” “The Roman arms stood up *from* Antiochus, as they crept stealthily into the management of his kingdom after his death, and began to usurp superiority over the Jewish nation.” Birks’ “Two later Visions of Daniel” (pp. 242, 243). There is still, however, great difficulty, I think, in this interpretation. St. Jerome notices it as that of the Jews, opposed herein to those who would interpret the prophecy either of Antiochus, or

of Antichrist, or of both. Referring first to those who understood it of Antiochus, he says, “Volunt autem eos significari qui ab Antiocho missi sunt post biennium quàm templum exspoliaverat, ut tributa exigere à Judæis, et auferrent cultum Dei; et in templo Jerusalem, Jovis Olympii simulachrum et Antiochi statuas ponerent, quas nunc ‘abominationem desolationis’ vocat: quando ablatum est holocaustum et jure sacrificium. Quæ universa in typo Antichristi, nostri præcessisse contendunt; qui sessurus est in templo Dei, et se facturum ut Deum. *Judæi* autem hoc nec de Antiocho Epiphane, nec de Antichristo; sed de *Romanis* intelligi volunt, de quibus supra dictum est, ‘Et venient trières,’ sive Itali atque Romani, et humiliabitur. Post multa, inquit, tempora, de ipsis Romanis, qui Ptolemæo venere auxilio, et Antiocho comminati sunt, consurget rex Vespasianus, surgent brachia ejus, et semina, Titus filius, cum exercitu; et polluent sanctuarium, auferentque jure sacrificium, et templum tradent æternæ solitudini.”

Page 144, Note 6.—St. Jerome introduces the reference to Antichrist with the 21st verse, in his comment on which he observes, “Hucusque ordo historiæ sequitur; et inter Porphyrium ac nostros nulla contentio est. Cætera quæ sequuntur usque ad finem voluminis, ille interpretatur super persona Antiochi qui cognominatus est ‘Epiphanes,’ frater Seleuci, filius Antiochi Magni, qui post Seleucum undecim annis regnavit in Syria; obtinuitque Judæam, sub quo legis Dei persecutio, et Machabæorum bella narrantur. *Nostri autem hæc omnia de Antichristo prophetari arbitrantur*, qui ultimo tempore futurus est. Quumque eis videatur illud opponi; quare tantos in medio reliquerit sermo propheticus, à Seleuco usque ad consummationem mundi; respondent quod et in priori historia ubi de regibus Persicis dicebatur, quattuor tantum reges post Cyrum Persarum posuerit; et multis in medio *transilitis, repente* venerit ad Alexandrum regem Macedonum: et hanc esse Scripturæ sanctæ consuetudinem, non universa narrare; sed ea quæ majora videantur exponere.”

The principle thus laid down would, doubtless, in its most general form, apply to an outline marking principal events through many centuries; but it would evidently apply more specially and strictly in the case of a rapid transition, bridging over (so to speak) a long intermediate period, as in the case of type and antitype.

Page 145, Note 7.—St. Jerome thus continues the passage quoted in the preceding note: “*Quumque multa quæ postea lecturi et exposituri sumus super Antiochi persona conveniant, typum eum volunt Antichristi habere: et quæ in illo ex parte præcesserint, in Antichristo ex toto esse complenda. Et hunc esse morem Scripturæ sanctæ, ut futurorum veritatem præmittat in typis, juxta illud quod de Domino Salvatore in septuagesimo primo Psalmo dicitur, qui prænotatur Salomonis; et omnia quæ de eo dicuntur, Salomoni non valent convenire. Neque enim permansit ille cum sole et ante lunam generationis generationum: neque dominatus est à mari usque ad mare, et à flumine usque ad terminos orbis terrarum; nec omnes gentes servierunt ei; neque ante solem permansit nomen ejus: nec benedictæ sunt in ipso omnes tribus terræ: neque omnes gentes magnificaverunt eum. Ex parte autem et quasi in umbra, et imagine veritatis in Salomone præmissa sunt; ut in Domino Salvatore perfectius implerentur. Sicut igitur Salvator habet et Salomonem et cæteros Sanctos in typum adventus sui; sic et Antichristus pessimum regem Antiochum, qui sanctos persecutus est, templumque violavit rectè typum sui habuisse credendus est. Sequamur igitur expositionis ordinem, et juxta utramque explanationem, quid adversariis, quid nostris videatur, breviter annotemus.*”

Page 148, Note 2.—Our Authorized Version, in the passage of St. Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 3—8, seems hardly to express, as clearly as the original, what would appear to be the essential principle and root of the varied manifestations and developments of Antichristian error and transgression. *Lawlessness*, it would seem, is, throughout, the characteristic marked by the Apostle. For the title *ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀμαρτίας*, “the man of sin” (ver. 3), might be inter-

preted by St. John's words, *πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ· καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία* (1 John iii. 4). And the revelation of "the man of sin," thus described, is identical with the revelation of "that wicked" afterwards spoken of. For the mystery of iniquity, lawlessness (*ἀνομίας*), doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall the lawless one (*ὁ ἄνομος*) be revealed" (vv. 7, 8). That the spirit of lawlessness threatens to characterise fearfully the "latter days," and that there are not wanting signs, in the present state of the world, of a ready coalition between the principles of Papal superstition and democratic irreligion, is a subject which can here only be commended to the consideration of the thoughtful. As regards the former, Dr. Wordsworth's "Letters to M. Gondon" and "Sequel" may be referred to, for proofs of "the *destructive* character of the Church of Rome, both in religion and policy."

Page 150, Note 7.—Cf. S. Hieron. *Algasiæ*, quæst. xi. on the text in 2 Thess. (ii. 4.) "Et extollitur supra omne quod dicitur Deus, ut cunctarum gentium deos, sive probatam omnem et veram religionem suo calcet pede; et in Templo Dei, vel Ierosolymis, (ut quidam putant,) vel in Ecclesia, (*ut verius arbitramur*), sederit, ostendens se tanquam ipse sit Christus, et filius Dei." Op. tom. iv. pars i. p. 209 (ed. Bened.). St. Jerome, however, it must be observed, in accordance with the general opinion in early times, interpreted the prophecy of Daniel of the sacred mountains of Palestine, and, definitely, the mount of Olivet, on which, it was believed, Antichrist would finally fall. And, indeed, the language of the prophecy appears so distinct and definite in its description of the taking possession of a "glorious holy mountain," especially when viewed in connexion with the mention of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia, &c., the tidings out of the north and east, &c., that it can hardly, perhaps, be understood otherwise than as marking out some spot emphatically so described, whatever that spot may be.

LECTURE VI.

Page 185, Note 8.—Cf. Spencer de Legibus Hebr. (Lib. iii. cap. 3. diss. v.). “Secundo vox ‘cherub,’ ad fortem, potentem, et validum significandum in Scripturis usurpatur. Hunc sensum voci affigendum docent Dei ad regem Tyri verba, **אֵת כְּרוּב מִמֶּשָׁח** *i. e.* interprete Tremellio, ‘Tu cherub eras, ex quo unxi te,’ &c. Ubi procul dubio vox illa potentiam et magnitudinem illam indicat, qua rex ille vicinos, imo et semetipsum superavit, ex quo Deus illum ad sedem regiam evexisset. Eam etiam notationem astruit cognata Syrorum dialectus, in qua **כְּרוּבָא** *potentem et magnum*, et **כְּרוּבוּתָא** *vim aut fortitudinem* sonare Lexicorum consensu comprobatum est. [This sense, however, of the Syriac seems questionable. Vid. Ges. Lex. *in voc.*] Hisce firmitatis aliquid addit Philo, (Lib. de Profug. p. 465,) qui tradit [haud dubie ex Hebræorum disciplina] per ‘Cherubim’ τὰς τοῦ ὄντος δυνάμεις, τὴν τε ποιητικὴν καὶ βασιλικήν, ‘potentias ejus qui est, creatricem et regalem,’ designari; et ἱλαστήριον fuisse σύμβολον τῆς ἰλῆω τοῦ Θεοῦ δυνάμεως, ‘symbolum propitiæ Dei potentiæ.’ Est itaque cur credatur, vocem ‘Cherub’ apud Hebræos antiquiores *potentiæ* notationem habuisse, quamvis significationis hujus antiquæ vix ulla, nisi in cognato Syrorum idiomate, supersint vestigia; hæc animum inducunt opinari, vocem ‘Cherub’ fortitudinis significatum apud Hebræos antiquiores habuisse. Inde vero res hæc mihi penitus confirmatur, quod Deus in sacris literis nunquam ‘super Cherubim sedere’ vel ‘equitare’ dicatur, nisi cum illius potentia et fortitudo celebranda vel invocanda veniat.”

He refers to 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Kings xix. 15; Psal. lxxx. 1; xcix. 1; xviii. 11 (Cf. sup. pp. 168—172), and then goes on to say, “Quid autem sancti viri, Dei sessionem inter Cherubinos, tanquam firmissimum potentiæ argumentum toties adhiberent: nisi quod ‘Cherubim’ fortes et validos olim denotaret, ideoque certum potentiæ divinæ rebus suis affuturæ omen et argumentum inde capiendum existi-

marent? Hisce nonnihil præsidii præbent Procopii verba (in Genes. c. 3. p. 79): ‘Scriptura solet vocare *Cherubim*, quicquid potens est. Id vel inde patet: “Qui sedet super Cherubim,” id est, qui potens est regnare: “Ascendit super Cherubim et ἐπετάσθη,” i. e. cum multa et magna advenit potentia.’ ”—pp. 844, 845.

LECTURE VII.

Page 203, Note 6.—Mede says, on the first seal, “Primus imperii Romani casus et sanè insignis, primordium est victoriæ Christi; quâ Dei Romani debellari, eorumque cultores, sagittis evangelii confixi, passim deficere, Christoque victori colla submittere incipiunt. Ἐξῆλθε (inquit) νικῶν, καὶ (N.B.) ἵνα νικήσῃ” id est, Nondum jam plenè vicit, sed fundamenta jecit victoriæ, deinde magis magisque complendæ.

. . . . “Sequentium quidem Sigillorum initia imperatoribus Romanis diriguntur: *sed ubi Christi res gesta describitur, ejus solius Imperatoris ratio habenda fuit.*” —Comment. Apocalypt. (Works, p. 442.)

LECTURE VIII.

Page 251, Note 8.—It appears to me, that these words of our Blessed Lord will not admit of any interpretation, other than that which would refer them to the generation then living. The words, as they stand in St. Matthew, are Ἀμὲν λέγω ὑμῖν, [ὅτι, Mark and Luke] οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ἕως ἂν [μέχρις οὗ, Mark] πάντα ταῦτα γένηται [ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται, Luke]. The concluding verb is, perhaps, best rendered in our Version, in St. Mark’s Gospel, “till all these things be *done.*” I cannot think that ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη can be understood of the Jewish nation, through many generations, or of the human race. It

would appear that, down to this point in His prophecy, our Blessed Lord is answering His disciples' question as to "the sign of" His "coming," and then proceeds to speak of that other day of His *final* coming, and "of the end of the world." And upon this, it would seem, He enters in the following verse, in which it is said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man," &c.

LECTURE IX.

Page 258, Note 1.—The words in St. Ignatius, ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου may be illustrated by a reference to Rev. xi. 1 (cf. sup. pp. 291—293), and by Mede's note on that place. He observes, "θυσιαστήριον non altare tantum holocausti, quod ibi situm, sed spatium etiam circumjectum, id est, totum altaris et sacrificii locum designat; ut ex verbis ei proximè cohærentibus colligitur, καὶ προσκυνοῦντας ἐν αὐτῷ, id est, ἐν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ. Quomodo etiam θυσιαστήριον sumitur cap. 14. v. 18. et cap. 16. 7. Vide Bezam. Unde Lexicon vetus Græcolat. θυσιαστήριον interpretatur 'Altarium,' 'Sacrarium,' " And in a note he observes, "Ita Socrates θυσιαστήριον vocat, non sacram mensam, sed ἱερατεῖον. Vid. lib. i. cap. 25. Gr. λζ'. et confer cum Theodoreto, lib. i. cap. 14. Vide et Canon. Trull. 69. Zosimum lib. 5. τράπεζα τοῦ καλουμένου θυσιαστηρίου. Item Nicephorum lib. viii. cap. 30, disertiss."

Page 279, Note 5.—"The pretensions of the Gnostics to penetrate the *depths* of God," Dr. Burton observes, "may perhaps be alluded to in Rev. ii. 24, by the words τὰ βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ. This was the opinion of Hammond, 'de Antichristo,' III. i. p. 5." Burton's Bampton Lectures, p. 84, note. It will be recollected what a prominent place was assigned to βυθός in the Gnostic genealogies, as the First Cause of all things. See Burton, p. 394; Bp. of Lincoln's Clement of Alexandria, pp. 277—280, &c.

Page 280, Note 3.—It can hardly, I think, be doubted that heresies of the Gnostic family were those which the apostles refer to, when they speak of false teachers, deceivers, and Antichrists, as already in the world, and warn their disciples against them. See 2 Tim. iii. 6—9; Tit. i. 11; 1 John ii. 18, 19, &c.

Page 282, Note 6. —“ M. Matter, after noticing the minor sects which harassed the outset of Christianity, and the attempts to unite Judaism and Christianity, as shewn in the Nazarene and the Ebionite sects, observes, that mischievous as all these were, they were but the prelude of a far more fearful defection, which shewed itself even at the end of the first century, and which was foreseen by the apostles. When they saw that Judaism introduced into Christianity such heterogeneous elements, they must have foreseen that Paganism, in its turn, would endeavour to bestow on Christianity its philosophy, its mythology, and its mysteries. They could, however, hardly have imagined that such an innumerable quantity of sects, entertaining notions so absolutely opposed to each other, would rise in the bosom of the same Church. (Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 166.)

“The following remarks, by the same author, deserve attention: ‘Les associations Gnostiques, se multipliant ainsi à l’infini, ne pouvaient que désoler les Chrétiens. . . . Les Gnostiques, à la richesse, à l’éclat de leurs doctrines, à l’enthousiasme qui les animait pour elles, joignaient encore les ressources d’une profonde érudition, les prestiges d’une thaumaturgie artificieusement combinée, et, si nous en croyons le sévère Irénée, les séductions des intrigues galantes. Ils acquirent, par tous ces moyens, une telle influence, et se firent une telle foule des partisans, qu’ils passèrent souvent pour les Chrétiens par excellence. Ils jetèrent, cependant, par leur culte, leurs mœurs, et toutes leurs aberrations, une telle défaveur sur la société Chrétienne, que l’on comprend facilement la véhémence, souvent injuste, avec laquelle les défenseurs de l’Eglise orthodoxe les combattent.’—p. 171.”

Mr. Rose adds, “I have often, I confess, been in-

clined to think, that the emersion of pure Christianity, so to speak, from errors so very widely spread among those who were so eminently calculated to corrupt and destroy, was, of itself, a sufficient proof of the truth of the religion.”—pp. 156, 157.

LECTURE X.

Page 296, Note 5.—But see the remarks of Bp. Horsley on the instances cited by Wintle. (Dissertation “on the Prophetical Periods,” British Magazine, vol. iv. p. 721.)

Page 298, Note 1.—Dr. Maitland refers to Lev. xii. 5, but would render the word שָׁבָעִים simply “sevens,” observing upon it, “Whether this is any thing more than such an elliptical form of expression as is common in all languages, when (as in this case) the context renders any mistake impossible, I do not determine.” (Enquiry, p. 8.) We are not, however, at liberty, I think, to discard the Masoretic points, which mark the word as dual, שָׁבָעִים; and our Authorized Version accordingly renders it “two weeks.” Dr. M’Caul, in opposition to a groundless hypothesis of the reviewer whom he is combating, adopts the same interpretation, and quotes the Targum as deciding “that שָׁבָעִים ‘two weeks’ means fourteen days; for, instead of the corresponding Chaldee word for *weeks*, it puts אַרְבַּעָה עָסָר, *fourteen days*, and the Septuagint the same, δις ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας.” (Remarks on the Morning Watch, p. 23.)

It may be argued that, in Dan. x. 2, 3, the addition of the word יָמִים proves that, without such addition, the word שָׁבָעִים, standing by itself, would signify weeks *not* of days. But, beside that the occurrence of the same word, used in the sense of weeks of *years*, in the prophecy immediately preceding, would sufficiently account for this addition, it

must be borne in mind how frequently the word יָמִים is added where the *whole* of a continuous period is denoted. Thus, according to the marginal rendering, שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁבָעִים יָמִים signifies “three *full* weeks,” *i. e.* three weeks, even so many days; in like manner as חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים signifies “a *full* month,” “the space of a month,” E. V. (Gen. xxix. 14.)

Page 299, Note 3.—“And Laban said Fulfil her week—מִלֵּא שָׁבַע זֹאת—“the week of this one” (Leah),—*i. e.* the week of the marriage feast for her,—“and we will give thee this one also (נָתַתִּי זֹאת לְךָ)” *i. e.* Rachel, “for the service which thou shalt yet serve with me yet seven other years” (שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים אַחֲרָיוֹת). It had been already related (v. 22) how Laban had “gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast,” for the marriage of his daughter to Jacob; and that the marriage feasts lasted seven days, appears sufficiently from Judges xiv. 12. 17. The history in Genesis continues, “And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week” (וַיִּמְלֵא שָׁבַע זֹאת)—the week of this one, Leah, duly celebrating his marriage with her, by keeping the seven days of the marriage feast—“and he (Laban) gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also” (v. 28). “And he went in also unto Rachel, and served with him yet seven other years” (עוֹד שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים אַחֲרָיוֹת) (v. 30). The week (שָׁבַע), or seven days, of the marriage feast, and the seven years (שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים) of service, seem to be clearly distinguishable from each other.

And so also Dr. M'Caul observes, “That the period of the seven days of the marriage feast, which is expressed in Gen. xxix. 27 by שָׁבַע is expressed in Judges xiv. 12 by שִׁבְעַת יָמִים. ‘Fulfil her *week*,’ says Laban. ‘Samson made there a feast, for so used the young men to do, and Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can declare it me within the *seven days* of the feast.’ That ‘week,’ שָׁבַע, Gen. xxix. 27, means the seven days of the feast, is shewn by Patrick, who says, ‘Perfect this marriage with Leah by keeping a *seven days*’

feast (as the custom was), and then thou shalt have Rachel also. For he doth not speak of a week of *years*, but of *days*; as Mr. Selden shews out of many authors, *L. v. de Jure N. et Gent. cap. v.*, where he hath this plain commentary upon these words: ‘Marriages are to be celebrated, according to custom, by a seven days’ feast: complete this marriage thou hast begun with Leah, and then upon condition of another seven years’ service, thou shalt keep her wedding feast seven days’” (Remarks, pp. 23, 24).

Page 302, line 13.—Thus Hippolytus, cap. 47. λέγει γὰρ Ἰωάννης, καὶ προφητεύσουσιν ἡμέρας χιλίας διακοσίας ἐξήκοντα, περιβεβλημένοι σάκκους· τουτέστι, τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς ἐβδομάδος, ἧς εἶρηκε Δανιήλ Καὶ ὅταν τελέσωσι τὸν δρόμον αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτῶν, τί φησιν ὁ προφήτης; τὸ θηρίον τὸ ἀναβαῖνον ἐκ τῆς ἀβύσσου ποιήσει μετ’ αὐτῶν πόλεμον, καὶ νικήσει αὐτοὺς, καὶ ἀποκτενεῖ αὐτοὺς. Again (in reference to Rev. xii. 14), αὐταὶ εἰσιν αἱ χιλίαι διακόσιαι ἐξήκοντα, τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς ἐβδομάδος, (the *latter* half, apparently, of the week,) ἃς κρατήσῃ τύραννος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν φεύγουσαν ἀπὸ πόλεως εἰς πόλιν, καὶ ἐν ἐρημίᾳ κρυπτομένην ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν (cap. 61.) Τούτων οὖν ἐσομένων, ἀγαπητὲ, καὶ τῆς μίας ἐβδομάδος εἰς δύο μερισθείσης, καὶ τοῦ βδελύγματος τῆς ἐρημώσεως τότε ἀναφανέντος, καὶ τῶν δύο προφητῶν καὶ προδρόμων τοῦ Κυρίου τελειωσάντων τὸν ἴδιον δρόμον, καὶ τοῦ σύμπαντος κόσμου εἰς συντέλειαν λοιπὸν ἐρχομένου, τί περιλείπεται, ἀλλ’ ἢ ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπ’ οὐρανῶν, εἰς ὃν ἠλπίκαμεν; (cap. 64.)

In like manner, the author of the treatise “De Consummatione Mundi,” attributed to Hippolytus: Τοῦ γὰρ Δανιήλ εἰπόντος, Ἐβδομάδα μίαν θήσομαι τὴν διαθήκην μου, τὰ ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἐδήλωσε· τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς ἐβδομάδος, τοῦ κηρύξαι τοὺς προφῆτας· καὶ τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς ἐβδομάδος, ἡγουν τὰ τρία ἥμισυ ἔτη βασιλεύσει ὁ ἀντίχριστος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς· καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἀρθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ δόξα. (cap. 25.)

It is not, however, perhaps very easy to determine absolutely from these or similar passages, whether the

writers would not still take literally the period assigned in the prophecy to the state of death of the witnesses ; and it is, no doubt, as Dr. Maitland observes, “ reasonable to suppose that those who conceived of the *individual witnesses* prophesying during 1260 *natural* days, and who should then be literally slain and rise from the dead, did also understand the three days and a half, during which these witnesses should be dead, as *natural* days, unless they explicitly stated the contrary.” Reply to a review in the “ Morning Watch ” (1830), p. 25.

Page 304, Note 7.—On the question as to the age of the author of this commentary, Mr. Elliott has a note, p. 967. He would fix it between A.D. 430 and A.D. 530, and thinks it clear that the writer belonged to the African Church. He remarks, upon the “ Admonitio ” prefixed by the Benedictine editors, that “ Primasius and Bede may have copied from the author of this Commentary, as well as he from them.” This point would deserve careful inquiry and comparison of passages. Dr. Wordsworth observes of this Exposition on the Apocalypse, that it “ is very valuable,” and thinks it “ very probable that these Homilies contain considerable portions of Tichonius’ treatise, adapted to the use of the Church.” Wordsworth’s Apocalypse, Appendix A. p. 114.

Mr. Elliott appeals to “ yet another expositor of the fifth century, viz. Prosper,” as an authority for the interpretation of the three days and a half as representing three years and a half. He quotes the “ Dimidium Temporis,” cap. 16. “ ‘ Tres et dimidius *dies* tribus *annis* et sex mensibus respondent, quibus potestas erit Antichristo ; eisque suppletis coram oculis inimicorum Helias et Enoch ascendentes in cœlum ibunt.’ Bibl. Patr. Max. viii. 48.” There seems, however, to be considerable doubt as to the authorship of this treatise. Vid. Admonit. in lib. de Promiss. et Prædict. Dei, apud Prosperi Op. (ed. Paris, 1711), Append. p. 86. It would appear that the author belonged to the African church, and lived in the fifth century.

It must be observed, however, that the writers referred

to, do, certainly, not speak as modern expositors have commonly spoken of the “prophetic style,” as using a day for a year; on the contrary, some of the instances to which they refer, they refer to (as is observed in the Lecture) as instances of the *converse*; which, however, they regard as supplying parallel instances illustrative of the mode of prophetic communication which they conceive to be adopted here. That, as a general principle, in the “prophetic style,” a day must be understood to represent a year, is undoubtedly a statement which it would be difficult to maintain.

Page 305, Note 8.—Andreas Cæsariensis is referred to, inasmuch as he mentions this interpretation as held by others. On the passage which speaks of the treading down of the holy city forty and two months, he says, “*Quadraginta autem duo menses temporis brevitatem, quo Novi Testamenti mysteria à primo Christi adventu ad secundum obtinebunt, exprimere aiunt.*” (Interp. Lat.) “His own opinion inclined, however,” as Mr. Elliott observes, “to construe it of the literal three years and a half of Antichrist’s expected reign.”

Ambrosius Ansbertus, upon the ministry of the two witnesses, says, “*Ita plane in his duobus testibus Enoch et Eliam accipimus, unum scilicet ante legem et unum in lege; ut tamen in illorum specie genus etiam attendamus, id est, sanctam Ecclesiam in suis prædicatoribus: sicque mille ducentis sexaginta diebus specialiter tempus Antichristi; ut tamen retroacta tempora, quæ nunc volvuntur, illi dies comprehendant: quatenus initium fidei Christianæ et consummationem, principium persecutionis Christianæ et finem, contineant. Quod etiam ante nos qui hanc revelationem subtilius quam alii exposuerunt, secuti sunt.*” (Bibl. Patr. Max. tom. xiii. p. 522. Cf. pp. 534. 545.)

Bruno Astensis, on Rev. xii. 6: “*Per dies 1260 omne tempus à Christi prædicatione usque ad diem ultimum intelligimus.*” (Ibid. tom. xx. p. 1697.)

The interpretation, however, which thus applied the vision to the whole duration of the Church militant, was essentially grounded, as it would appear, upon the belief

that there would be three *literal* years and a half of trial and persecution at the latter end of the Church's warfare, even as there were three years and a half of the earthly ministry of its Divine Head, at the first opening of the Gospel dispensation. The period specifically marking the first great scene and the last was regarded as mystically extended to include the whole.

Page 306, Note 1.—Joachim “taught that the period of three times and a half¹, or of forty-two months, or of 1260 days, signified no less than 1260 years: ‘Accepto haud dubiè die pro anno, et 1260 diebus’ pro totidem annis.’ And he explained the month of thirty days to mean a generation of thirty years. . . . However, there was really to be a period of three natural years and one-half at the end of the corresponding mystical period; and that will form the especial period of the great Antichrist's tyranny: ‘Qualiter anni isti ad totius Bestiæ universitatem pertineant, in opere Concordiæ dictum est. Reverâ autem anni tres et dimidius’ esse creduntur, quibus maximè hæc tempestas desæviet.’ They constitute the reign of the ‘regulus,’ or Daniel's eleventh king⁴, and in them ‘gravior inducetur vexatio’.

“The persecution and tribulations of 1260 years are those of the Church militant from its earliest beginnings, viz., from the nativity of its persecuted Founder; and those years are accordingly computed from that great epoch. ‘During all that number of years, the holy city is trampled by the nations; because, while that space of time lasts which three years and a half designate, power is given to the infidels to trample the faithful, though partially indeed, and not in toto’.”—British Magazine, vol. xvi. pp. 370, 371.

Page 306, Note 3.—To the writers referred to in the Lecture may be added Rupertus Tuitiensis, of the twelfth

¹ See Exp. in Apoc. fol. 9, b. 148, b.; in Hierem. c. 20, p. 285.

² Liber Concordiæ, 2, c. 16, and 5, c. 118.

³ In Apoc. 165, b.

⁴ See Expos. in Apoc. fol. 9, b. 143, a; Liber Concordiæ, 5, c. 112.

⁵ In Hieremiam, c. 20.

⁶ In Apoc. 148, b.

century, who, on the words “Et post tres dies et dimidium,” &c., says, “Quantum temporis supra significaverat, dicendo: Et civitatem sanctam calcabunt mensibus quadraginta duobus: itemque: Et prophetabunt diebus mille ducentis sexaginta, tantundem significat, dicendo nunc, tribus diebus et dimidio. Itemque, et post dies tres et dimidium. Tempus ergo, et tempora, et dimidium temporis, i. annos tres et semissem, tres dies ac dimidium hic appellat. Cur hoc?” The explanation which he gives is as follows, continuing the question: “Cur dum prophetarent testes isti, tempus prophetiæ illorum diebus mille ducentis sexaginta, id est, tribus annis et dimidio præfinitum est, postquam autem prophetaverunt, postquam bestia occidit corpora, post hæc non habitura quid faciat, pro tribus annis et dimidio, tres dies et dimidium dicere vel scribere complacitum est? Nimirum quia sanctis Dei testibus in agno [agone] permolesto pro veritate certantibus, dum instat, dum præsens est molestiæ tempus, dum quo nolunt ducuntur, sensui fragilissimæ carnis longum videtur; postquam autem abierit tempus illud, ut jam ultra non sit mors, neque luctus, neque clamor, neque dolor, quod prima abierunt, tunc demum positus in æternitate beata, respicientibus post tergum, breve videbitur fuisse quod pertulerunt, et tunc perpendent quam vere Apostolus dixerit: Quia non sunt condignæ passionibus hujus temporis ad futuram gloriam, quæ revelabitur in nobis.” Comment. lib. vi. (Op. t. ii. p. 553. ed. Mogunt. 1631.)

The explanation here given is peculiar; but the manner in which the interpretation of three days and a half, as equivalent to the three years and a half, is stated thus undoubtingly, is very observable.

Page 312, Note 7.—“King Henry VI., in his charter’, dated in the twentieth year of his reign, whereby he gives certain lands to the University, saith thus of it—... ‘ad nostram notabilem et famosam Universitatem Oxon. quæ velut oliva in domo Domini fructifera, quamplures pal-

’ Pat. 20. Hen. VI. p. 1. m. 5.

mites fructuosos, viros viz. fructuosos, in scientiis liberalibus notabiliter imbutos a non modico tempore transacto huc usque continue protulit et produxit.' . . ."—Anthony à Wood, *l. c.* Comp. p. 77. (History and Antiquities, by Gutch, vol. i.) where it is said, in reference to the same university, as described in ancient charters, "A place it is from which, as King Edward III.⁸ saith, 'honores et commoda nobis et regno nostro Angliæ provenerunt et provenire sperantur in futurum,' &c. . . . 'à quâ Universitate' (saith he elsewhere⁹) 'clerici fructuosi et de scientiâ famosi pro directione reipublicæ ante hæc tempora sunt extracti, &c. . . . quæ Universitas, veluti vitis abundans per exercitium literalis scientiæ innumeros produxit palmites fructuosos, viros, viz. providos et discretos, qui sicut novellæ olivarum frondentes et fœcundantes in fructum, nedum regnum nostrum Angliæ (they are the words of the same King¹), sed orbem terrarum in circuitu intellectus et sapientiæ dulcedine repleverunt, &c. . . . Ex Universitatis nostræ prædictæ (saith the said King elsewhere²) et studentium in eadem doctrina, fides dilatatur Catholica, et sancta DEI ecclesia, maxime Anglicana, dilucidè roboratur, &c. . . . de quâ (etiam) tot ad regendum populos, ad illuminationem multorum, doctores hactenus processerunt," &c.

Page 313, Note 9.—The University thus addresses its appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Henry Chichele), and other Bishops of the Church in Synod assembled, anno 1438: "O quam dolendum est, piïssimi Patres, vineam Domini Sabaoth, Ecclesiam scilicet unicam Dei sponsam, tam impudentibus atque indoctis cultoribus ad excolendum esse traditam: quomodo lucernæ ardentes in SS. Dei Ecclesia erunt, si nec oleum, nec lumen in lampade fuerit: quid dicemus de his, nunquid primum oleum sanctæ conversationis ac vitæ integritatem, nunquid et lumen doctrinæ scientiæ et veritatis, quo officium sanctæ prædicationis ac administrationis Verbi Dei ex-

⁸ Pat. 27 Edw. III. p. 2. m. 4.

⁹ Pat. 29 Edw. III. p. 1. m. 6.

¹ Pat. 30 Edw. III. p. 2. m. 10.

² Pat. 15 Edw. III. p. 2. m. 41.

erceant intus in animis foveant?" &c. . . . — Anthony à Wood, vol. i. p. 589.

Page 322, Note 9.—Bp. Horsley's interpretation, or forebodings, of the sackcloth ministry of the witnesses ought here to be noticed. He says:—

“The Church of God on earth will be greatly reduced (as we may well imagine) in its apparent numbers, in the times of Antichrist, by the open desertion of the powers of the world. This desertion will begin in a professed indifference to any particular form of Christianity, under the pretence of universal toleration, which will proceed from no true spirit of charity and forbearance, but from a design to undermine Christianity by multiplying and encouraging sectaries. The pretended toleration will go far beyond a just toleration, even as it regards the different sects of Christians. The governments will pretend an indifference to all, and will give a protection in preference to none. All establishments will be set aside. From the toleration of the most pestilent heresies, they will proceed to the toleration of Mahometanism, atheism, and at last to a positive persecution of the truth of Christianity. In these times, the temple of God will be reduced almost to the holy place, *i. e.*, to the small number of real Christians who worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and regulate their doctrine, and their worship, and their whole conduct strictly by the word of God. The merely nominal Christians will all desert the profession of the truth, when the powers of the world desert it. And this tragic event I take to be typified by the order to St. John to measure the temple and the altar, and leave the outer court (national churches) to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. The property of the clergy will be pillaged, the public worship insulted and vilified, by these deserters of the faith they once professed, who are not called apostates, because they never were in earnest in the profession. Their profession was nothing more than a compliance with fashion and public authority. In principle they were always, what they now appear to be, Gentiles. When this general desertion of the faith takes place, then

will commence the sackcloth ministry of the witnesses. For it is evident that they begin to prophesy in sackcloth when the holy place has been measured and the outer court is given up. They will then be clothed in sackcloth. There will be nothing of splendour in the external appearance of these churches; they will have no support from governments—no honours—no emoluments—no immunities—no authority, but that which they derive from Him who commissioned them to be his witnesses.” *Letters*, Brit. Mag. vol. v. p. 520.

Bp. Horsley’s view of the prophecy derives additional importance from the general course and apparent tendency of events since his time. And the description given of the prophesying in sackcloth, with the idea which that imagery would convey, may appear, perhaps, more easily to combine with the shorter period than with the longer; especially if the fulfilment of it be looked for in national churches. It must be borne in mind, at the same time, that the ministry of the prophets in Israel, from which the imagery in the vision is borrowed, might well have been so described throughout the period of its continuance; although sometimes these ministers and witnesses of God were in “honour,” as well as sometimes in “dishonour;” and, even in the days of the captivity in Babylon, those who “stopped the mouths of lions,” and “quenched the violence of fire,” were chief ministers in kings’ courts. (Compare Bp. Ken’s “Sermon preached in the King’s Chapel at Whitehall, 1685,” on the history and character of Daniel.) Bp. Horsley’s interpretation, it will be observed, closely connects the prophecy concerning the two witnesses with national churches, although he would limit the predicted ministry to a much shorter period than twelve hundred and sixty years. If the application of the prophecy to the longer period be admitted, we might quote, in illustration of it, the language which has been well employed in reference to the Church, even where apparently in power and prosperity,—

“By monarchs clad in gems and gold,
She goes a mourner still.”—*The Christian Year*.

On the other hand, the parallel presumed, as we have seen, by some expositors of venerable antiquity, between the first and the last times of the Gospel, the ministry and sufferings of the Divine Head of the body and of His mystical body, the Church, would be evidently the nearer and closer, if the *ministry* of the witnesses were for three literal years and a half, and their state of *death* for three days and a half. But in either case it would seem that a period of three literal years and a half, whether under the description of twelve hundred and sixty days, or of three days and a half,—a period of special trial and affliction to the Church, and temporary triumph to her enemies,—was ordained for her to pass through.

Page 332.—(Comp. pp. 289. 295, 296. 339.) In regard to any passages in which the different periods variously designated as “a time, times, and a half,” “forty and two months,” or a “thousand two hundred and threescore days” are spoken of, in the Lectures, as marking “the *same* period,” or “a *like* period,”—in regard, severally, to the treading of the holy city by the Gentiles, the ministry of the witnesses, the abode of the woman in the wilderness, and the dominion of the wild beast,—it is to be observed, the words are used with the limitation expressed in the following extract from Dean Woodhouse. “These three prophetic periods,” he observes, “are of the same length or duration: they measure the same *quantity* of time. But another question will arise; whether they measure the same identical period; for although allowed to measure the same quantity of time, they may possibly succeed each other; or if they be contemporary in *some* parts, yet it may not appear that they quadrate and agree in *all*: their beginnings and their endings may not be at the same points.” From a careful comparison of the several periods, he arrives at the conclusion that “all of them appear to synchronize in *some parts* of their course: but that they agree and coincide in *all* their points,” as Mede endeavours to prove, he thinks, “will not be so easily admitted.” He observes, that “there is an interval, full of action, between the fall of the dragon and the rise

of the beast, namely, that in which the dragon pursues the woman, casting after her torrents of water; and it is not till after he has in vain tried this method of destroying her, that, enraged at his disappointment, he raises up *the beast* to war against the rest of her offspring (see ch. xii. 13—17; and ch. xiii. 1).” “The synchronism of the beast with the prophecy of the witnesses seems likewise defective in proof.” “Nothing is more manifest than that the beast does not come to his end at the same time with the witnesses; for the witnesses are slain *by him*; and when they are slain, they *finish their prophetic office*; as is expressly declared in ch. xi. 7. Add to this, that the earthquake and fall of one tenth of the city, which concludes the prophecy of the witnesses, and also the sixth trumpet (ch. xi.), cannot be the same with the great slaughter and total victory under the seventh trumpet (ch. xix.), when the beast is destroyed.”

“The four grand Apocalyptic periods,” the same writer further observes, “are involved very much together, and before the final completion of them *all* has taken place, it may not be in the power of man to settle the times when each of them had its commencement. . . . Commentators seem to have been too adventurous in fixing the exact commencement of these periods, which appear to be involved in a purposed obscurity, which *the event* only can clear.” (Annotations, pp. 272—277.)

LECTURE XI.

Page 339, Note 5.—“Ascetics,” as Bingham shews, “there were always in the Church; but the monastic life, neither name nor thing, was not known till toward the fourth century. Mr. Pagi fixes its original to the time of Constantine (Crit. in Baron. an. 318. n. 12), and he cites Holstenius and Papebrochius for the same opinion.” Its *first* origin, indeed, is traced, in what follows, to the times of “the Decian persecution, which was about the middle

of the third century," when "many persons in Egypt, to avoid the fury of the storm, fled to the neighbouring deserts and mountains, where they not only found a safe retreat, but also more time and liberty to exercise themselves in acts of piety and divine contemplations; which sort of life, though at first forced upon them by necessity, became so agreeable to some of them that, when the persecution was over, they would not return to their ancient habitations again, but chose rather to continue in those cottages or cells which they had made for themselves in the wilderness." Still there were "only a few single persons scattered here and there in the deserts of Egypt, till Pachomius, *in the peaceable reign of Constantine, when the persecutions were ended*, procured some monasteries to be built in Thebais in Egypt, from whence the custom of living as regulars in societies was followed, by degrees, in other parts of the world, in the succeeding ages." (Bingham, b. vii. chap. i. sect. 4.)

In connexion with Bp. Taylor's observations, quoted in the Lectures, may be cited the following, from Herbert's "Country Parson." "He often readeth the lives of the primitive monks, hermits, and virgins, and *wondereth not so much at their patient suffering and dying under persecuting emperors* (though that indeed be very admirable), as at their daily temperance, abstinence, watchings, and constant prayers and mortifications, *in times of peace and prosperity*." (chap. 9.) With this may be compared the description given in his poem, "The Church Militant," how—

"Holy Macarius and great Anthony
Made Pharaoh Moses ; changing th' history.
Goshen was darkness ; Egypt full of lights."

Page 340, Note 6.—"‘We are not,’ he justly observes," says Mr. Elliott, continuing his reference to Milner, "‘to form an idea of ancient monks from modern ones. It was a mistaken thing in holy men of old to retire altogether from the world. But there is reason to believe that it originated in piety.’ A sketch," Mr. Elliott continues, "of the monk Antony's character and faith follows [in

Milner], which should be read. Instead of Antony's *heading* (as we might perhaps expect from his being a monk)," says Mr. Elliott, "the gathering superstitions of the times, he is actually associated with *Vigilantius* by Mr. Daubuz, p. 538, as an opponent to them." (Horæ Apocalypticæ, p. 798, note.)

"I fully agree," Mr. Elliott elsewhere says, "with the sentiment so beautifully expressed by Mr. Maitland, in his book on the Waldenses, as to the piety of many a tonsured monk, &c., only with this difference, that he would range them among the *witnesses*, I among the members of the *Church hidden in the wilderness*." (Horæ Apocalypt. p. 815, note.) Dr. Maitland, however, it may be observed, would not "range them among the witnesses," inasmuch as he regards that prophecy as yet to be fulfilled.

I transcribe from Dr. Maitland's volume ("Facts and Documents," &c., pp. 45, 46) the passage, not less full of truth than of beauty, to which Mr. Elliott refers.

"I have just said, that if any papist should tell me that our religion was not to be found before the time of Calvin and Luther, I should be satisfied to answer him according to his folly; but I would, by no means, be understood to admit the truth of his statement; for I believe it to be as false as it is foolish, and feel no doubt that, in the darkest age, there were many true and accepted worshippers of God. Not formed into churches, and eminently bearing their testimony in corporate capacities as churches, against the see of Rome (for then, I think, we should have heard more about them), but as the sheep of Christ dispersed abroad in the midst of this naughty world—known, perhaps, by this or that name of reproach, or, perhaps, the obscure and unknown, whose names were never written anywhere but in heaven. I doubt not that there were such, living a life of faith, and prayer, and communion with God, overlooked in the bustle of cities and the solitude of cottages, and even shut up in what modern systems require us to consider as the strongholds of Antichrist, the cell and the cloister. I will not shrink from avowing my belief, that many a tonsured head now rests in

Abraham's bosom; and that many a frail body, bowed down with voluntary humility, and wasted with unprofitable will-worship, clothed in rags, and girt with a bell-rope, was a temple of the Holy Ghost; and that one day—a day when the follies of system, and the sins of party, and man's judgment of his fellows, will have come to an end—these, her unknown children, will be revealed to the astonishment of a Church accustomed to look back, with a mixture of pride and shame, to the days of her barrenness. She may ask, 'Who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?' but she will have learned to know the seal of the living God, she will embrace them as her sons, and will find better matter of discourse than their superstition and her illumination.

"In the mean time, however, they are hidden, perhaps more completely than they need be, if due pains were taken to look after them, and gather what might be known."

Page 344, Note 3.—Mr. Galloway, in his "Gate of Prophecy" (London, 1846), takes notice of this. He observes (on Rev. xii. 3), "The mystery of the seven heads, as shall afterwards be proved, is to be explained by summing together all the heads of all the four beasts described in the vision of Daniel's seventh chapter." Vol. ii. p. 256. Comp. pp. 305—307. Vid. inf. Note, Appendix (p. 376, Note 9).

"This first beast of the Apocalypse," says Dean Woodhouse, "appears to be that worldly tyrannical domination, which, for many ages, even from the times of the Babylonish captivity, . . . had been hostile to the Church; but more especially under the fourth beast of Daniel, the Roman usurpation." (Woodhouse, Annot. p. 263.) "Mede very properly denominates this seven-headed beast *Bestia secularis*, in contradistinction to the two-horned beast, whom he calls *Bestia ecclesiastica* (Works, pp. 498 and 505). The former seems to have been in action from the earliest times of government after the form patriarchal, even from the times of Nimrod. But the later enormities

which are displayed in the prophecy of Daniel, and in this and the ensuing chapters of the Apocalypse, are to be dated only from the junction and co-operation of the two." Woodhouse, p. 271.

Page 356, l. 18.—In illustration of the view taken in the Lecture, I would quote the following remarks, which coincide with my *general* meaning.

"It is important to observe, that if the prophecies of the Old Testament are allowed to admit of a primary and of a secondary accomplishment, there appears to be no reason why a similar mode of interpretation should not be adopted respecting the prophecies of the New Testament. Yet this point has scarcely ever been attended to. Protestants, suffering under the power of the papacy, or insensibly led by their religious opinions, have seen the *whole* of Antichrist in the Church of Rome, or some power or powers connected with it. They saw the prophecy to be, in many parts, *clearly* applicable to the Church of Rome, and they looked for no other accomplishment; though the difficulty with which many passages are brought to apply to this object, indicates it to be but a primary or partial fulfilment; and this difficulty led to differences of opinion, which, to the eye of superficial readers, appear to have thrown an obscurity over the whole subject. It is clear, however, from the prophecies themselves, that a long series of time is required for their fulfilment; and though it is *designed* that we should see *as much* of the prophecies fulfilling *in our own time*, as to *guard* us against the evils and dangers prevalent in those times, we should be cautious in *restricting* the sense of any to one particular *period*, excepting those which are evidently thus confined by Scripture. If it be obviously absurd to imagine we can judge with certainty respecting the *time* and *manner* in which events plainly predicted will be accomplished in future, it is equally so to imagine that our ancestors could judge of the present times as clearly as we can do. Some portion of novelty, therefore, in an interpretation can be no objection to its truth, provided it harmonizes with esta-

blished opinion concerning the principal points of prophecy itself." Kett on Prophecy, vol. i. pp. 300, 301.

The designation which Lord Bacon has employed of "the *springing* and *germinant* accomplishment" of Prophecy (cf. sup. p. 20), more fully and appropriately expresses the idea to be conveyed, than the words "primary" and "secondary." For "herein," says Lord Bacon, in regard to "prophetic history," "we must allow that latitude which is agreeable and usual unto Divine prophecies, that their fulfilment may be both continuous and definite. For they answer to the nature of their Author, with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. And though their full and entire completion be commonly fixed to some certain age, yet they have, meanwhile, steps of fulfilment through various ages of the world. This work is wanting; but," he adds at the same time, "it is so weighty, that it should be treated with great wisdom, sobriety, and gravity, or altogether declined."

Page 357, Note 2.—Irenæus has been often quoted as though he had proposed or adopted, without any doubt, the word *Lateinos* as the solution of the mystic number. Thus Bp. Newton says, "No name appears more proper and suitable than that famous one mentioned by Irenæus, who lived not long after St. John's time, and was the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John. He saith, that 'the name *Lateinos* contains the number of 666; and it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are Latins who now reign: but in this we will not glory; that is, as it becomes a modest and pious man in a point of such difficulty, he will not be too confident of his explication."

Dr. Wordsworth, in like manner, says of Irenæus, that "proceeding to speak of this number, he adds, that it is wiser to be patient, till the Prophecy is fulfilled, than to pronounce confidently upon it; but that in his own opinion, the word *Λατῆϊνος*, *Latinus*, which contains the requisite number, expresses the Anti-christian power. And why, you may ask, does he fix upon this word? Be-

cause the Latins, or *Romans*, are they *who now reign*; alluding manifestly to the words of St. John, ‘The woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’

“It is therefore clear,” Dr. Wordsworth continues, “that Irenæus interpreted the prophecies of St. John, concerning the woman on the seven hills, the woman which reigneth, the woman which is *Babylon, the mother of fornications*, of no other city than *Rome*; and we might add, *he* did not apply them to *Pagan Rome*, for he expressly says that the Anti-christian power represented by that name *was not yet come*. (S. Iren. v. 20. εἰ ἄλλο ἔχων ὄνομα Ἀντίχριστος ἐλεύσεται.)” Lectures on the Apocalypse, pp. 349, 350.

It might be inferred from this statement, that Irenæus identified the Antichrist with Babylon, and that in his opinion *Ααρτῆνος* was certainly the word which expressed that power. Irenæus, however, tells us that Antichrist, in conjunction with the seven kings remaining of the ten who were to arise out of the division of the Roman empire (for Antichrist was to subdue three of those kings), was to be the *destroyer* of Babylon. “Manifestum est itaque, quoniam ex his tres interficiet ille qui venturus est, et reliqui subjicientur ei, et ipse octavus in eis; et *vastabunt Babylonem, et comburent eam igni*, et dabunt regnum suum bestię, et effugabunt Ecclesiam.” (lib. v. cap. 26. 1.) And with regard to the number of the name, he first explains it to be “in recapitulationem universę apostasię ejus, quę facta est in sex millibus annorum.” (cap. 28. 2.) This he proceeds to explain by a reference to the six thousand years of the world’s duration, taken in connexion with the six days of creation, the six hundred years of the age of Noah, and the sixty cubits in height and the six in breadth which give the measure of Nebuchadnezzar’s image. “Universa enim imago illa præfiguratio fuit hujus adventus, ab omnibus omnino hominibus ipsum solum decernens adorari. Sexcenti itaque anni Noe, sub qua fuit diluvium propter apostasiam, et numerus cubitorum imaginis, propter quam justi in caminum ignis missi sunt, numerum nominis significat illius, in

quem recapitulatur sex millium annorum omnis apostasia, et injustitia, et nequitia, et pseudo-prophetia, et dolus, propter quæ et diluvium superveniet ignis.” (cap. 29. 2.)

Irenæus then discusses and determines the proper reading of the number given by St. John, “reproves those who hastily endeavoured to interpret it, and then endeavours to lay down correct principles of interpretation for it. He suggests that we must wait till the other signs of Antichrist begin to be fulfilled, such as the division of the Roman empire into ten parts, and the sudden coming of another power to their discomfiture. We must also remark, he tells us, that Jeremiah (viii. 16) has foretold that he will be of the tribe of Dan.” (Beaven’s Account of S. Irenæus, p. 247.) This tribe, he observes, is not enumerated in the Revelation (chap. vii.) with those who are saved. He then goes on to say, as in the passage quoted above (p. 356, note 1), Ἀσφαλέστερον οὖν κ.τ.λ. . . . or, in the Latin version, “Certius ergo et sine periculo est, sustinere ad impletionem prophetiæ, quàm suspicari et divinare nomina quælibet; quando multa nomina inveniri possunt habentia prædictum numerum; et nihilominus erit hæc eadem quæstio. Si enim multa sunt quæ inveniuntur nomina, habentia numerum hunc; quod ex ipsis portabit qui veniet, quæritur.” And he proceeds thus:—

“Quoniam autem non propter inopiam nominum habentium numerum nominis ejus dicimus hæc, sed propter timorem erga Deum et zelum veritatis: ΕΥΑΝΘΑΣ enim nomen habet numerum de quo quæritur: *sed nihil de eo affirmamus*. Sed et ΑΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ nomen habet sexcentorum sexaginta sex numerum: et *valdè verisimile est*, quoniam novissimum regnum hoc habet vocabulum. Latini enim sunt qui nunc regnant: *sed non in hoc nos gloriabimur*. Sed et ΤΕΙΤΑΝ, primâ syllabâ per duas Græcas vocales ε et ι scriptâ, *omnium nominum quæ apud nos inveniuntur, magis fide dignum est*. Etenim prædictum numerum habet in se, et literarum est sex, singulis syllabis ex ternis literis constantibus, et vetus, et semotum; neque enim eorum regum, qui secundùm nos sunt, aliquis vocatus est Titan; neque eorum, quæ publice adorantur, idolorum apud Græcos et barbaros habet vocabulum hoc; et divinum

putatur apud multos esse hoc nomen, ut etiam sol Titan vocetur ab his qui nunc tenent: et ostentationem quamdiu continet ultionis, et vindictam inferentis, quòd ille simulat se male tractatos vindicare. Et aliàs autem et antiquum, et fide dignum et regale, magis autem et tyrannicum nomen. *Cùm igitur tantum suasionum habeat hoc nomen Titan, tamen¹ habet verisimilitudinem, ut ex multis colligamus ne fortè Titan vocetur qui veniet.* Nos tamen non periclitabimur in eo, nec asseverantes pronuntiabimus, hoc eum nomen habiturum; scientes, quoniam si oportet manifeste præsenti tempore præconari nomen ejus, per ipsum utique editum fuisset, qui et Apocalypsim viderat. Neque enim ante multum temporis visum est, sed pene sub nostro sæculo, ad finem Domitiani imperii. Hunc autem numerum nominis ostendit, ut caveamus illum venientem, scientes quis sit: nomen autem ejus tacuit, quoniam dignum non est præconari à Spiritu sancto.” . . . (cap. 30. 3, 4.)

It can hardly, I think, be doubted, by any one who carefully studies the whole passage, that this last-mentioned word was that which, on the whole, Irenæus acquiesced in as the most probable.

It must be observed, however, that Dr. Wordsworth's quotation from Irenæus has reference chiefly to his allusion to the Romans, and their city, as then reigning over the earth, and so described in prophetic Scripture; in regard to which point his testimony is unquestionable. (Cf. sup. p. 67.)

Perhaps the truth may be, that the word *Lateinos* was the conjection of Irenæus himself, which would account for his modest manner of speaking of it; whereas *Teitan* was one of those which had been already suggested (“quæ apud nos inveniuntur”), and the one which, of these, he thought the most probable.

Hippolytus, however, manifestly following Irenæus in the three names which he mentions, decidedly inclines to the word *Lateinos* as the true solution; on the same ground

¹ “Sic omnes codd. uno excepto Feuard. (quem sequutus est Grabinus) qui reposuit *tantam*; sed unde,

et qua auctoritate? non monet. Hic verò *tamen* accipitur pro *utique*, *profectò*, *proinde*.” Massuet.

with Irenæus, in regard to the fourth empire being that of the Latins, which he identified with the head whose deadly wound was healed. The same spirit which characterizes Irenæus is observable in what Hippolytus says on this subject, so full of mystery. Περὶ μὲν τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐν ἡμῖν τοσοῦτον ἀκριβὲς ἐξειπεῖν, ὥς ἐνενόησε καὶ ἐδιδάχθη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὁ μακάριος Ἰωάννης, ὅσον μόνον ὑπονοῆσαι· ἀναφαίνοντος γὰρ αὐτοῦ δείξει ὁ μακάριος τὸ ζητούμενον· πλὴν ὅσον νοοῦμεν ἀμφιβάλλοντες λέγομεν· πολλὰ γὰρ εὐρίσκομεν ὀνόματα τούτῳ τῷ ἀριθμῷ ἰσόψηφα περιεχόμενα, οἷον, ὥσπερ εἶπεῖν, τὸ Τειτάν ἐστίν, ἀρχαῖον καὶ ἔνδοξον ὄνομα, ἢ τὸ Εὐάνθας· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸ τῇ αὐτῇ ψήφῳ ἐμπεριέχεται, καὶ ἕτερα πλείονα εὐρεθῆναι δυνάμενα. Ἄλλ' ἐπειδὴ προέφθημεν λέγοντες (cap. 49. cf. sup. p. 352, note 4), ὅτι ἐθεραπεύθη ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θηρίου τοῦ πρώτου, καὶ ποιήσει λαλεῖν τὴν εἰκόνα· τουτέστιν, ἰσχυσε· φανερόν δ' ἐστὶ πᾶσιν, ὅτι οἱ κρατοῦντες ἔτι νῦν εἰσὶ Λατῖνοι· εἰς ἑνὸς οὖν ἀνθρώπου ὄνομα μεταγόμενον γίνεται Λατεῖνος. Ὡστε οὔτε προκηρύσσειν δεῖ ὥς ὄντος τούτου ὀνόματος, οὔτε πάλιν ἀγνοεῖν, ὅτι μὴ ἄλλως δύναται λέγεσθαι· ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μετὰ φόβου φυλάσσειν πιστῶς τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν μακαρίων προφητῶν προειρημένα, ἵνα γινομένων αὐτῶν, προῖδόντες μὴ σφαλλώμεθα· τῶν γὰρ καιρῶν ἐπιγινομένων καὶ αὐτὸς, περὶ οὗ ταῦτα εἴρηται, φανερωθήσεται. (Hippolyt. de Antichr. cap. 50.)

He had before said, in the same spirit, Ταῦτά σοι, ἀγαπητὲ, μετὰ φόβου μεταδίδομεν εὐκύλως διὰ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν Χριστοῦ ἀγάπην. Εἰ γὰρ οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν μακάριοι προφῆται γεγεννημένοι, εἰδότες αὐτὰ οὐκ ἠθέλησαν μετὰ παρρησίας κηρύξαι, ἵνα μὴ τάραχον ποιήσωσι ταῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχαῖς, ἀλλὰ μυστικῶς διηγήσαντο διὰ παραβολῶν καὶ αἰνιγμάτων λέγοντες· ὧδε ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἔχων σοφίαν· πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς κινδυνεύσομεν τολμῶντες τὰ ὑπ' ἐκείνων ἀποκρύφως εἰρημένα εἰς φανερόν λέγειν; (cap. 29.)

LECTURE XII.

Page 371, Note 3.—I have spoken, in the Lecture, of the *undoubted* identity of the wild beast described in chap. xvii. 8, with that of which we read in chap. xi. 7, as ascending “out of the abyss,” and also of the *apparent* identity with that which is described, in chap. xiii. 8, as ascending “out of the sea.” I have spoken thus, because, in the latter case, there is less perfect identity, and consequently more room for doubt. Comp. Woodhouse’s *Apocalypse* (p. 337), with his *Annotations* (p. 359). Mr. Elliott, in opposition to Mr. Brooks, Bengel, and others, maintains their complete identity. (*Horæ Apocalypt.* pp. 818—828.) It would appear, from Rev. xvii. 8, as though the ascent “out of the abyss,” or “bottomless pit,” marked the last form and development of the wild beast’s manifold existence and tyrannic power.

Page 376, Note 1.—Dr. Maitland points out, with great force, the continual “shifting forms of the Roman government,” between consuls, dictators, decemviri, military tribunes, &c., and “the impropriety of representing these (supposed) heads as consecutive.” He says, “As far as I can understand the history of the Roman empire up to the time of St. John, it was simply this—a *Monarchy* existed until the people rose and destroyed it—a *Republic* was then formed, which existed, under various modifications, for several centuries, during which it tended, generally and gradually (if I mistake not, I might say naturally), to a Democracy in theory, and an Aristocracy in practice, until, at length, Monarchy was restored. How to make more changes, without descending to such minor variations of constitution as would make too many, I know not, and I believe the thing is impossible.”

Page 376, Note 9.—We find Rupertus thus explaining the seven heads of the dragon, which is described, in the vision of the twelfth chapter, as ready to devour the man

child, the offspring of the woman: “Hujusmodi capita veraciter septem sunt: quia nimirum ex quo pater Abraham et posterī ejus fidem seminis (in quo benedicentur omnes gentes) susceperunt, septem sunt mundi hujus regna, ex traditione sanctarum Scripturarum, quæ adversus eandem fidem dimicaverunt, sed nondum venit regnum septimum. Primum namque ex quo credidit Abraham, regnum fuit *Pharaonis et Ægyptiorum*, filios Israel odientium: secundum regnum fuit Jezabelis, et filiorum vel posterorum ejus impiorum, regnum Israel et Juda, qui prophetas occiderunt: tertium *Babylonium*: quartum *Persicum* sive *Medicum*: quintum *Macedonicum*: sextum *Romanum*: septimum quod futurum est Antichristi regnum. Præter hæc regna septem nullum aliud memorat Sancta Scriptura stetisse vel stare ante illam mulierem ad devorandum filium ejus, contra sanctam ecclesiam ex qua credidit Abraham, ad destruendam fidem seminis ejus.” (Comment. in Apocal. lib. vii. Op. tom. ii. p. 558.)

And again, in like manner, of the wild beast out of the sea, described in the vision of the thirteenth chapter. “‘Habentem,’ inquit, ‘capita septem et cornua decem.’ Hoc et de dracone illo magno et rufo supra dixit, quod haberet capita septem et cornua decem: Nimirum quia et bestia hæc et draco ille unus idemque diabolus est, cum corpore suo, *i. e.* cum universo impiorum populo. Nam sicut illic jam dictum est, capita septem, regna sunt septem, quorum persecutiones bene ex scripturis cognitæ eo tendebant, ut in mundo extingueretur sanctum veræ divinitatis nomen. Et quidem hactenus sparsim atque successim capita illa frenduerunt, unumquodque vice sua contra Deum faciens bellum. Primo, regnum Ægyptiorum, &c. . . . Cum autem venerit quod tractamus, quum bestia hæc de mari ascenderit, habens capita septem, cuncta simul capita rictibus propriis hiabunt atque frendent super Christianos dentibus suis, secundum intentionem septimi et maximi capitis, quod Antichristus erit.” (Comment. lib. viii. *ibid.* p. 567.)

Mr. Galloway makes “the five heads which were fallen” to be “the heads of the Babylonian lion, of the Medo-

Persian bear, and three of the heads of the Greek leopard, the fourth of them still surviving in the Roman or Latin-Greek empire." "Gate of Prophecy," vol. ii. p. 319 (comp. pp. 306, &c.). This interpretation of the seven heads has this advantage, over that proposed in the Lecture, that it keeps closer to the imagery of Daniel's vision. It seems to me, however, not free from difficulty in regard to the heads belonging to the Macedonian empire.

Page 377, Note 4.—Mr. Elliott is of opinion that "the very symbol of a *dragon*, or wild beast, necessarily excludes the supposition of its ever representing a *Christian* power; besides which," he adds, "and as if to force attention the more to the characteristic, it is said that *all* the heads had on them names of blasphemy. This," he goes on to say, "has of course been quite overlooked by those who would make the Roman Christian emperors, inclusive of Constantine and Theodosius, the beast's seventh head." (Horæ Apocalypt. p. 846, note.)

The emphatic word "all," on which Mr. Elliott thus lays stress, is not found in the description given in St. John's vision. It is there simply said, that the wild beast had "upon his heads the names," or rather, as in our Authorized Version, "the name of blasphemy" (marg., "Or, *names*"). The wild beast never appeared with more than these seven heads, the eighth being "of the seven," while the seventh is described as "other" than these. It was necessary that this seventh head should thus be connected with the symbolic form descriptive of earthly dominion, though it were divers from them, in being Christian. The objection does not seem to me to have in it any considerable force.

Page 378, Note 6.—Mr. Elliott says, "It is to be observed, that in the present instance the association of the *μία* with the *μετα του θηριου* makes the phrase as indicative of a specific point of time, as the numeral *seventh* in the former of the two examples just cited (cf. sup. p. 378, note 5—*χθες ωραν εβδομην αφηκεν αυτην ο πυρετος*), or other distinctive adjectives. For *μετα* with the genitive

following," he goes on to observe, "is, as Matthiæ says, equivalent to *συν* with the ablative. And *εἰς, μια, ἐν* before an ablative, with *συν* expressed or understood, is used in the sense of *ὁ αὐτός*. So Phœniss. 157, 'Ὁς ἐμοὶ *μίας* ἐγενετ' ἐκ *ματρός*—who was born of the same mother as myself:—the *εἰς* and *ὁ αὐτός* being sometimes both used together, as in 1 Cor. xi. 5, *ἐν γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῇ ἐξυρημένῃ*. Which being so, the clause under consideration becomes significant of a *point* of time: and the whole passage the same as translated above,—'Receive their kingdom *at one and the same time with the beast*.'

"Such, in fact," Mr. Elliott continues, "is the signification assigned to it, as Daubuz observes, p. 792, by Cyril of Jerusalem. For he says, in his 15th Catechetical Lecture, *Εν διαφοροῖς μὲν ἰσως τοποῖς, κατὰ δὲ τοῦ αὐτοῦ βασιλευνὸς καιρὸν*. It is also the rendering, as Bossuet has observed, of Irenæus, Primasius, and the Vulgate." (Horæ Apocalypt. p. 872, note.)

Dr. Wordsworth understands it in the same way—"at one hour, that is, *at one and the same time with the beast*." Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 372. (cf. p. 274.)

Undoubtedly, in Mr. Elliott's words, as from Matthiæ, "*μετὰ* with the genitive, is equivalent to *συν* with the ablative" (or rather the dative), at least in certain senses; or, to quote Matthiæ's own words, *μετά* "signifies, with the genitive, 'together, with,' as *σύν*, as well in order to shew companionship as a mean." (Gr. Gr. § 587.) It would not, however, follow that, in all cases in which *σύν* might be used with the dative, *μετά* might equally well be used with the genitive. And Matthiæ no where says, nor is it correct to say, that *εἰς, μια, ἐν*, before an *ablative*, with *συν* expressed or understood, is used in the sense of *ὁ αὐτός*." Matthiæ says, "The words which signify 'equality, suitableness, resemblance,' or the contrary, as *ὁμοῖος, ἴσος*, &c., govern the *dative*. . . . In the same manner as *ὁ αὐτός*, *εἰς* also is constructed with the *dative*. *Eur. Ph.* 157 [the instance quoted by Mr. Elliott], *ὅς ἐμοὶ μιάς ἐγένετ' ἐκ ματέρος*." (Gr. Gr. § 386.) So also in 1 Cor. xi. 5. But no instance would be found of such a construction as *σὺν ἐμοὶ μιάς*, or *μετ' ἐμοῦ μιάς*. For instances "of the

imitation of this in Latin," Matthiæ adds, "see *Burm. ad Ovid. Am. I. 4, 1. Cort. ad Sallust. Catil. 20, 3.*" There, in like manner, it is the dative that is used, not the ablative with *cum* ["nobis easdem," not "nobiscum"]. It is not, in Irenæus and Primasius, "unâ bestię horâ," but "unâ horâ accipient *cum* bestiâ." And Irenæus, it is to be observed, does not make the rise of the ten kings to be at the same time with that of the wild beast, though they rose at the same time with each other. (Cf. sup. cit. pp. 66, 67.) The same may be said of St. Cyril.

Page 381, Note 9.—Bossuet says, in reference to St. Jerome's speaking of Rome as Babylon, "il ne cesse de répéter que Rome est la ville que Dieu a maudite dans l'Apocalypse, sous la figure de Babylone; qu'encore qu'elle ait en partie effacé, par la profession du Christianisme, le nom de blasphême qu'elle portoit sur le front, ce n'est pas moins elle même 'que ces maledictions regardent, et qu'elle ne peut les éviter que par la pénitence (lib. de Script. Eccles. In Esai. xlvii. lxiii. Lib. ii. adv. Jov. in fin.); qu'elle est en effet cette prostituée, qui avoit écrit sur son front un nom de blasphême, parcequ'elle se faisoit appeler la Ville Eternelle (Epist. 151. ad Algas. 9. xi.); que c'étoit elle dont saint Jean avoit vu la chute sous le nom de Babylon," &c. (Preface sur l'Apocalypse, p. 94.)

Bossuet is, not unnaturally, anxious to prove that Rome was, in a great degree, heathen at the time of its capture by the Goths; and he quotes St. Jerome as saying of Rome, "qu'elle ait *en partie* effacé, par la profession du Christianisme, le nom de blasphême," &c. St. Jerome's words, however, are not thus qualified. "Sed ad te loquar, quæ scriptam in fronte blasphemiam Christi confessione *delesti*." (Cf. sup. p. 69, note 1.) Rome had dropped her heathen claim to be the Eternal City: she has since, under a new form, revived it.

THE END.

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